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OTAKU VOCABULARY

You'll find some Japanese terms crop up again and again. Here are a few definitions:

ANIME Japanese animation

CHARA character

KAWAII cute

MANGA Japanese comics

MECHA mechanical object, ie robot,

vehicle, weapon, etc.

OTAKU anime fanboy/girl

OVA/OAV Original Video Animation, anime

made for video

SEIYUU anime voice actor

KONNICHIWA!

To begin on a very serious and very important note, next week sees the fiftieth anniversary of a world-changing event - the dropping of the atom bomb. Whatever side you take in the debate on this subject, surely no-one can fail to agree that it's an event which we hope will never be repeated. The best way to mark this anniversary is to try and ensure that the many changes in the world over the last fifty years lead eventually to peace for everyone on earth. Let's keep hoping and working towards the goal of a peaceful world.

The world is always changing, and we have to change with it. Here at ANIME FX we've made a lot of changes since I last wrote an editorial. Yes, that's one of them. After five years we've changed our name from ANIME UK to reflect a new situation. Not only are we now part of a publishing group with offices in the USA and Japan, but the world of anime has changed enormously since we first started out. Fans from Britain are now in touch with others all around the globe. British labels release material throughout Europe and have international links. And ANIME UK has moved from being a photocopied fanzine gleaned from the few scraps of available news and information to a fullscale magazine reporting on all kinds of developments in anime and a wide range of related fields. We're not just a British anime zine any more, but part of the wider world of ANIME FX.

And of course our magnificent team of freelance contributors are still with us, some with expanded and more regular roles in keeping you informed on every aspect of the anime and manga world.

A change you'll notice in this issue is that every single page is now in glorious full colour (except for those advertisers who wanted to stick with black and white). Steve has felt for a long time that this was the best way to show the full power of anime and manga, and we're all delighted that our new association with Ashdown Publishing has allowed us to take this major step. As a result of our restructuring we are also saying goodbye to John Spencer. His contribution as designer and as writer of the LIVE AND KICKING column has been valued and we wish him well for the future.

Change is always unsettling. That's what it's for - to shake things up, sort old things out, squeeze new things in and generally make things fresher.

We hope you'll like the changes we've made. More important, we hope you'll notice the thing that stays the same - our commitment to giving you, our readers, the best magazine we can make.

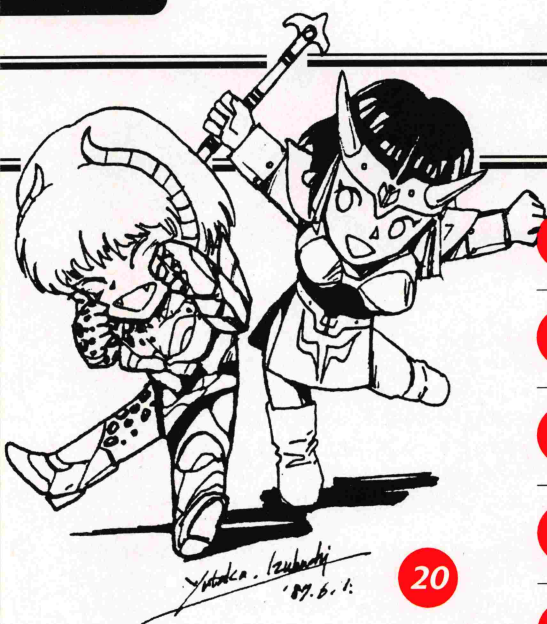
Yours animatedly,

Helen McCarthy
Editor



Front Cover: EL HAZARD.
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Studio

contents



20



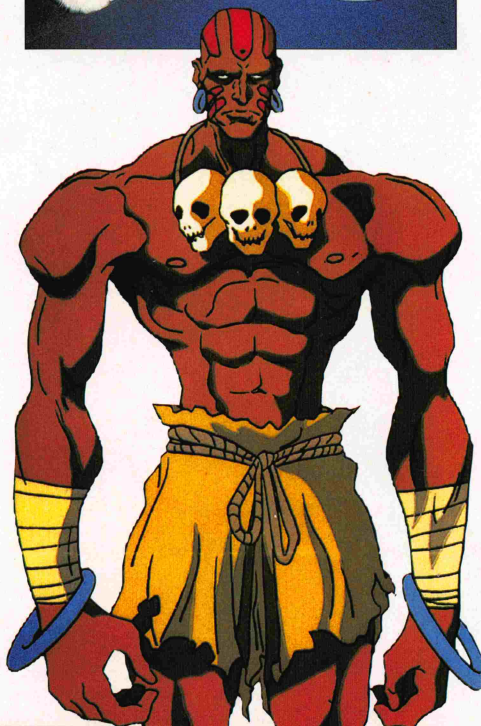
25



32



46



5

NEWSCAN - what's hot all over the anime world

8

SFX - Ken Hollings looks at Japan's **DREAMS OF TALL BUILDINGS AND MONSTERS**

11

NO MORE HIROSHIMAS Festival - Josh Clarke covers the Newcastle event

12

CPM COMIX - a new force on the American Manga scene.

14

STREET FIGHTING GRAFFITI - part 2 of our feature looks at a few of the many facets of the **STREETFIGHTER** phenomenon.

20

YUTAKA IZUBUCHI - THE INTERVIEW. **Helen McCarthy** talks to the man who dreams mecha and elves into being.

23

ANIME ON THE INTERNET. Ever wondered how to get 'netted? **Geoff Cowie** is our guide

25

GHOST IN THE SHELL - a Sakura Studio picture special.

28

SPACE FIREBIRD - a classic illustrated.

32

FLY PEEK - Kiseki's latest release breaks new ground. A perfect summer story for all ages.

34

EL HAZARD - the magnificent World of this new OAV series visited by **Peter Evans** of Sakura Studio - and an interview with its creator.

42

MACROSS ; Shockwave. Part 3 of **Peter J. Evans'** history of the classic series and its rebirth for a new decade.

46

NATIONAL VAMPIRE HUNTER CHAMPIONSHIP - arcade games and costume play by **Masaaki Kato.**

48

JAPAN ROCKS - **Jonathan Clements** falls in love with Shonen Knife.

51

GAMES CAPSULE - new developments and coming attractions, by **Paul Watson**

52

SCANNING - latest books and videos reviewed

57

SOAPBOX - something to sound off about? Do it here!

58

ANIMAIL - your letter on anything anime-related.

61

FANZONE - contacts, penpals, news and more of your own artwork.

66

OUTZONE - until next time!

newscan

CONVENTION NEWS has moved to our FANSCENE ROUNDUP pages - look for the latest convention info there!

USA

ORION AND STREAMLINE RELEASE HIROSHIMA CLASSIC

On 11th July Orion Home Video released Streamline's English language closed-caption edition of one of the greatest classics of Japan's postwar period. BAREFOOT GEN, the true-life story of Hiroshima and its aftermath seen through the eyes of a small boy, is based on Keiji Nakazawa's manga, which has sold more than 10 million copies in several languages since its original publication in 1972. (The manga's English translation by Frederik L. Schodt and Jared Cook is rightly regarded as one of the jewels in the crown of the translated manga industry.) BAREFOOT GEN is a testament of the human spirit; it points no fingers and lays no blame, but simply and unflinchingly describes the reality of living through a nuclear holocaust. BAREFOOT GEN is available from all good American video retailers, specialist stores and mail order suppliers at a suggested retail price of \$29.98.

BOOTLEGGERS TO BE J.A.I.L.E.D.

The Video Software Dealers Association convention in Dallas, Texas, was the setting for an announcement by John O'Donnell, Managing Director of Central Park Media, of the formation of the Japanese Animation Industry Legal Enforcement Division - JAILED. The organisation has been set up to fight piracy and protect the Intellectual Property rights of its members. Participating members include A.D. Vision, Inc., AnimEigo, Inc., Central Park Media Corp., Manga Entertainment, Inc., Books Nippan, Pioneer Entertainment (USA) Ltd., The Right Stuf, Viz Communications and Voyager Entertainment, Inc.

JAILED represents companies based in the United States of America and therefore will be protecting the Intellectual Property of these companies in the USA. The organisation has appointed renowned Intellectual Property lawyer Jules Zalon to represent its interests, and has established a 1-800 (freephone) number

to enable fans, retailers and members of the general public to report pirates or bootleggers. Anyone offered bootleg tapes or merchandise who wishes to report the matter, or who has any information about piracy which may help the legitimate rights holders to protect their property, can call 1-800-917-9799 at any time. (Voice mail operates outside office hours.)

A number of fans were approached by a representative of one of the US anime companies prior to the organisation being set up, and have expressed concerns about the issues raised then. However JAILED representative Leslie Hyman says 'JAILED is certainly not an organization devoted to antagonize anime fans. Anime fans are the basis of our business and we thoroughly appreciate their support and opinions. Rather we are devoted to maintaining a high level of professionalism and quality throughout the Japanese animation industry. Therefore, our efforts will be focussed on prosecuting the most egregious offenders violating our Intellectual property rights.' JAILED has issued a statement on the Internet pointing out that they do not intend to prosecute anyone who makes a fan subtitled tape for personal enjoyment or shows such a tape at a club meeting. However, the organisation will prosecute anyone selling such copies, which constitutes commercial piracy.

NEW US LABEL LAUNCH

SOFTWARE SCULPTORS, known for their anime screensavers, are going in some exciting new directions. Their first foray into the videotape business premiered at ANIME EXPO with the launch of their first two titles, METAL FIGHTER MIKU and ZENKI. Not content with this, they also have their first full-length anime release in CD-ROM format with a hybrid QuickTime disk containing episodes 1, 2 and 3 of the renowned RECORD OF LODOSS WAR for Mac or Windows 3.1-based pc systems. The whole series will be released in 4 CDROM volumes, with the last volume containing four episodes. The tapes and the CD-ROM volumes will each set you

back US\$24.95. Available from Central Park Media in the USA; contact your local specialist comic or anime retailer or any good anime mail order supplier in Europe.

RYOICHI Ikegami TO ATTEND SAN DIEGO COMICON

The artist of CRYING FREEMAN, SANCTUARY, MAI THE PSYCHIC GIRL and a host of other titles is to attend the San Diego Comic Convention as the guest of Viz Communications, his US publishers. He will make a public appearance and do a signing session on Saturday 29th July. He will also speak at a symposium with American comic artists. Last year's VIZ guest Rumiko Takahashi, who won the Ink Pot Award last year, is nominated for three Eisner Awards this year as Best Writer/Artist, Best Humor Publication (for RANMA 1/2), and Talent Most Deserving of Wider Recognition. (This last, of course, refers only to wider recognition in the West - we shouldn't forget that Ms Takahashi's work substantially

outsells that of most Western comic stars in its original language.)

PRETTY BOYS FOLLOW SAILOR GIRLS

SAILOR MOON hits the syndicated airwaves in mid-September; DRAGONBALL is set to follow soon after. Now yet another popular kind of anime is set to make its US - the mystic warriors sagas YOROIDEN (Legendary Armour) SAMURAI TROOPERS, in which five cute teenagers in magic samurai armour battle to prevent the powers of evil from taking over the world. Graz Entertainment plans to bring the show to US TV as RONIN WARRIORS. The namechange was the result of a request from Playmates, the company responsible for marketing the action figures based on the series; they felt that since there are already popular toy lines with the words 'Samurai' and 'Troopers' in their titles, a change was necessary. Graz say that, apart from 'punching up' the music and effects track to make them more acceptable to an American audience and changing a few character names to



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make them easier for Americans to pronounce, they will not be making any changes, or attempting to disguise or overlook the show's Japanese origins.

JAPAN

OTAKU HEAVEN?

Anime for 18 hours a day - your favourite old shows in all their glory, all the episodes, in order - your favourite seiyuu in their greatest roles. Sound like a dream? Well, if you live in Japan it will come true next year with Bandai's satellite channel OTTACK BEAM on CS Skyport. Extensive advertising in the anime, toy and entertainment press means that just about everyone in Japan now knows how to sign up; alas, there is no sign yet of its being available in Europe (unless anybody out there has a BIG dish).

MANGA CLASSICS RE-RELEASED

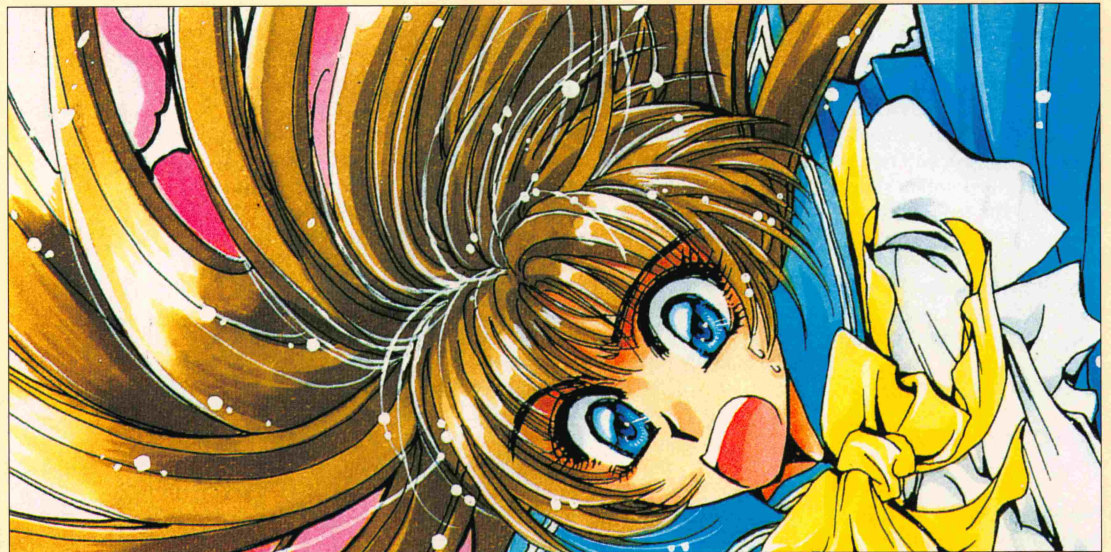
Among a string of classic manga coming onto the Japanese market in pocketbook collections is Go Nagai's infamous HARENCHI GAKUEN - usually translated as SHAMELESS SCHOOL. The work which shot him to national fame, and was publicly burned by the Japanese Parent Teacher Association as a dangerous corrupting influence, is about life in a high school where the pupils have very little respect and the teachers very little control; this is your chance to get one of the earliest works of a master of the medium. Available from good Japanese bookshops everywhere.

CUTE ATTACK - NEW RELEASES FOR A LONG HOT SUMMER

MEGAMI PARADISE is yet another in this summer's string of OAVs that are underdressed, overcute, but NOT, alas, over here - well, not yet anyway. Part 1 came out in June, part 2 in July. Here are some settei to let you see what we mean.

MIYUKI-CHAN IN WONDERLAND is the latest series from CLAMP. NEW-TYPE readers will be familiar with the heroine's exploits in various increasingly wild fantasy situations; now you can see it all in glorious moving pictures on a 29minute OAV. Our reporter from Sakura Studio, Peter 'Overcute' Evans, tells us that the music is not to his taste and the story is 'vacuous fluff', but oh, those cutes!

Below: Hiyuki - chan



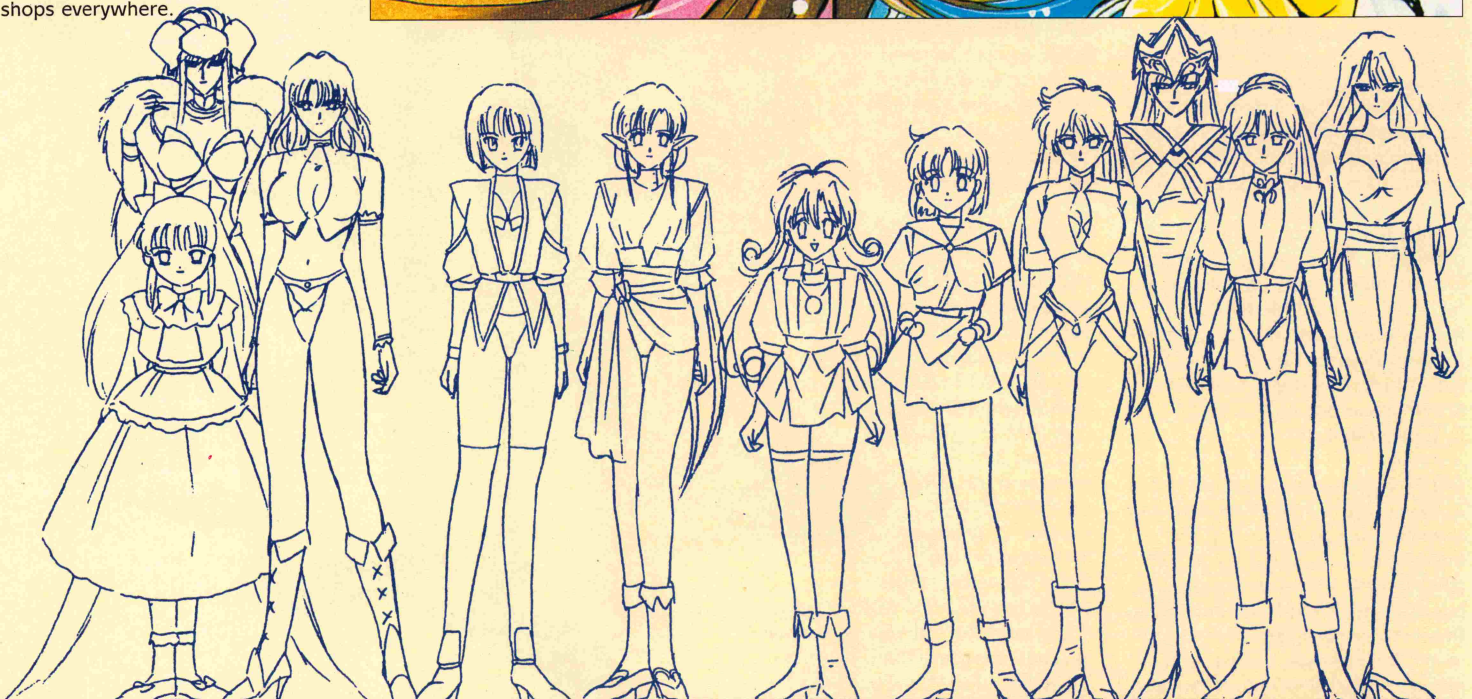
MANGA MARKET GROWS OVERALL BUT MALE MARKET SHRINKS

Figures recently released for 1993 manga sales show that the boys' market, traditionally the sector leader, had lower sales in 1993 than 1992. The drop is only 0.4%, but backed by a drop of 0.7% on the young mens' comic sales it may be an early indication of a trend worth watching. With sales of 550 million copies in the young mens' sector and 220 million in the boys' and girls' sector forming part of an industry that turned over about ¥550 billion in 1993, it is premature to talk of the collapse of the manga market, but it's interesting to note that the 220 million issues sold to boys and girls represented a growth of 8% over 1992, indicating that the girls' market is gaining ground strongly.

PAI IN THE SKY

Ok, an awful pun, but what better way to tell you that the video and LD of the latest instalment of SAZAN EYES is out now! Just time to rush to Tokyo before the shops shut...

Yes, Mei, there really IS a Totoro Forest - even though, alas, visitors have been complaining that they haven't seen Totoro himself there. Environmentalists have set up a protected forest in Saitama Prefecture, the setting for Hayao Miyazaki's 1988 film MY NEIGHBOUR TOTORO, and with the director's full support have named it the 'First Totoro Forest'. They hope eventually to have Totoro Forests all over Japan, preserving the rapidly disappearing woodland environment for future generations. (Information from Sakura Studio and THE ROSE.)



MEGAMI PARADISE line up: Back Row: Pastel, #1 Mamamega, #2 Mamamega. Front Row: Yamimama, Maharaja, Rouge, Angela, Lulubel, Lilis, Juliana, Stacia

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EUROPE

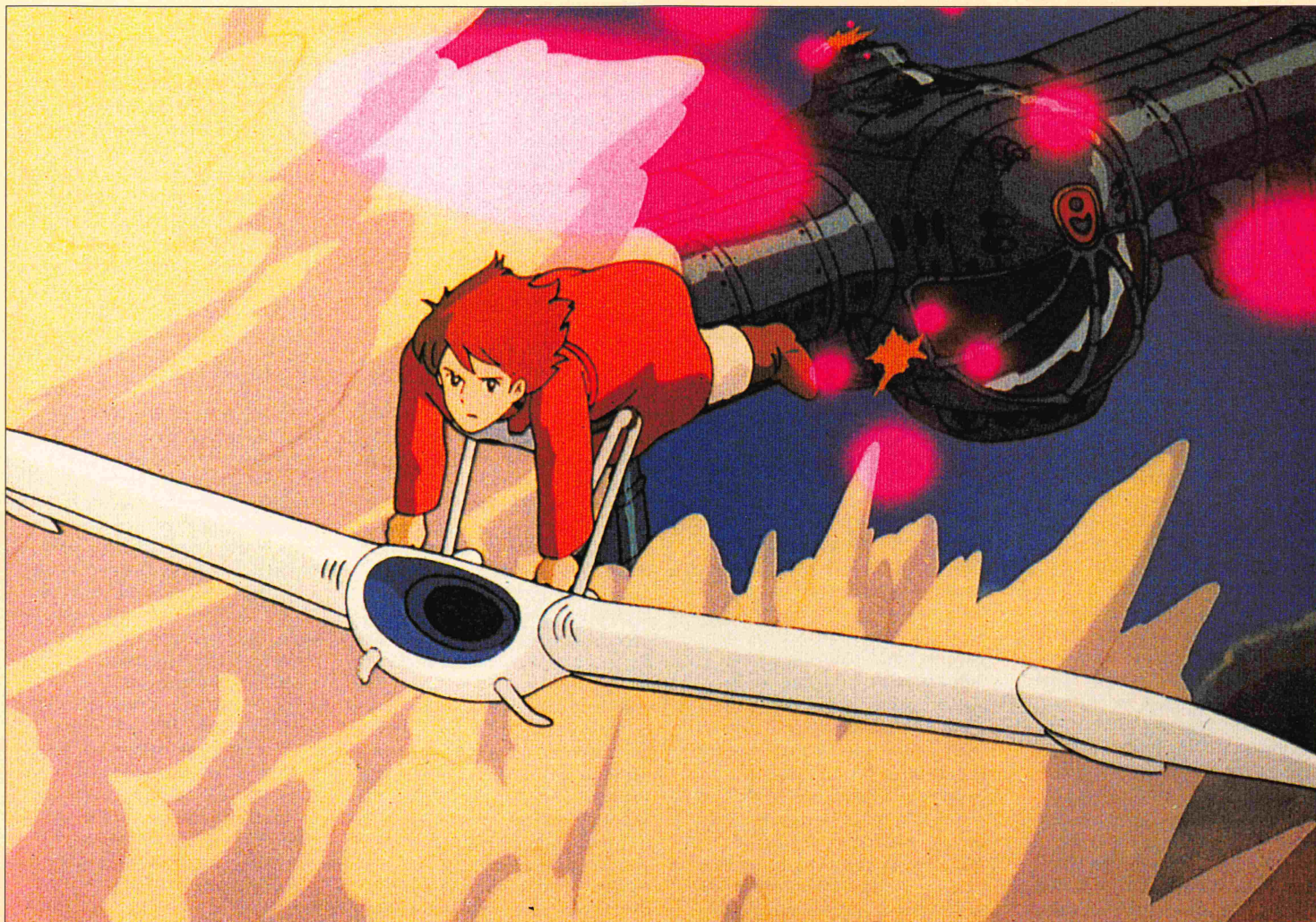
MANGA EN FRANÇAIS

After their success with VIDEO GIRL AI, TONKAM are beefing up their manga line with a number of new releases. U-Jin's erotic highschool manga ANGEL and CLAMP's RG VEDA and TOKYO BABYLON are joined on the roster by Naoki Yamamoto's ASATE DANCE and the innovative TEKKONKINKORITO by Matsumoto Taiyo. The new French translations will be pocket-book sized and run unflipped in the Japanese format. TONKAM are also publishing a French edition of U-Jin's artbook JEUNE. Available from any good comic shop in France, or for mail order details contact TONKAM at BP 356 75526 Paris CEDEX 11, France.



BUILDING BRIDGES

The NO MORE HIROSHIMAS campaign has a festival of film and animation running from 28-31 July with a lot to offer anime and manga fans. The British premiere of NAUSICAA OF THE VALLEY OF WIND in Miyazaki's own subtitled cut will take place on 30 July at the ICA, with showings at 5pm and 7 pm. Earlier in the day, renowned translator and manga historian Frederik L. Schodt gives a talk and slide show entitled 'The Meaning Of Manga' and the University of London Students' Union. Other events include screenings of TOMBSTONE FOR FIREFLIES, BLACK RAIN and anti-Japanese propaganda films from World War II. There'll be a mini-market with stalls at ULU from 12 noon so you can buy goodies before the slideshow; groups and dealers might like to note that as we go to press one or two stalls may still be available. A ticket for the whole Festival will cost you £20, or you can buy tickets for individual events. For more details contact Emmanuel Ohajah on 0171 281 1241 or email emmanuel@easynet.co.uk.



DREAMS OF TALL BUILDINGS AND MONSTERS

Ken Hollings

Welcome to Earthquake Island

Some pretty strange dust started to settle in the media after the earth shifted so tragically under the people of Kobe and Osaka in January this year. As the extent of the damage became increasingly clear, and the casualty rate soared into the thousands, the international news services struggled to make sense of it all, revealing in the process a fault line of misunderstanding running from East to West that was as real as any that might lie beneath the Japanese mainland. Commentators, experts and other assorted professionals crowded onto the airwaves to explain how the Japanese had neither predicted the earthquake correctly nor prepared for it adequately in advance and that they knew next to nothing about disaster relief or even how to counsel the survivors. Unfavourable comparisons were also made between the Kobe and the Los Angeles earthquakes. The Japanese people, it was implied, were being so obviously and wilfully wrong-headed about the whole thing that they didn't even deserve to have the earthquake in the first place. The truth is that the broadcast media tend to confuse their own reactions to an event with the actual event itself. Such incidents as the Kobe earthquake have a long history of occurring on the Japanese mainland.

An ancient piece of mythological wisdom has the island of Japan resting upon the back of a gigantic catfish that lies submerged beneath the primordial mud. Every so often, about every seventy years on aver-

age, the fish twitches its tail, and that's when the earth starts shaking. Some kind of major upheaval had been expected in Japan since the Great Kanto Earthquake devastated Tokyo in 1925, killing 250,000 of its inhabitants.

All the same, there must have been many in the West who looked at their video collections with feelings of unease. Wholesale urban demolition has long been a staple element in anime, and fans of kaiju eiga - Japanese live-action monster movies - have seen Tokyo reduced to rubble so often that the city must be permanently associated in their minds with scenes of destruction. And that is perhaps where the tragedy of Kobe really lies. Everyone had expected the earthquake to hit Japan much further north; in Tokyo itself.

The Uncertainty Principle

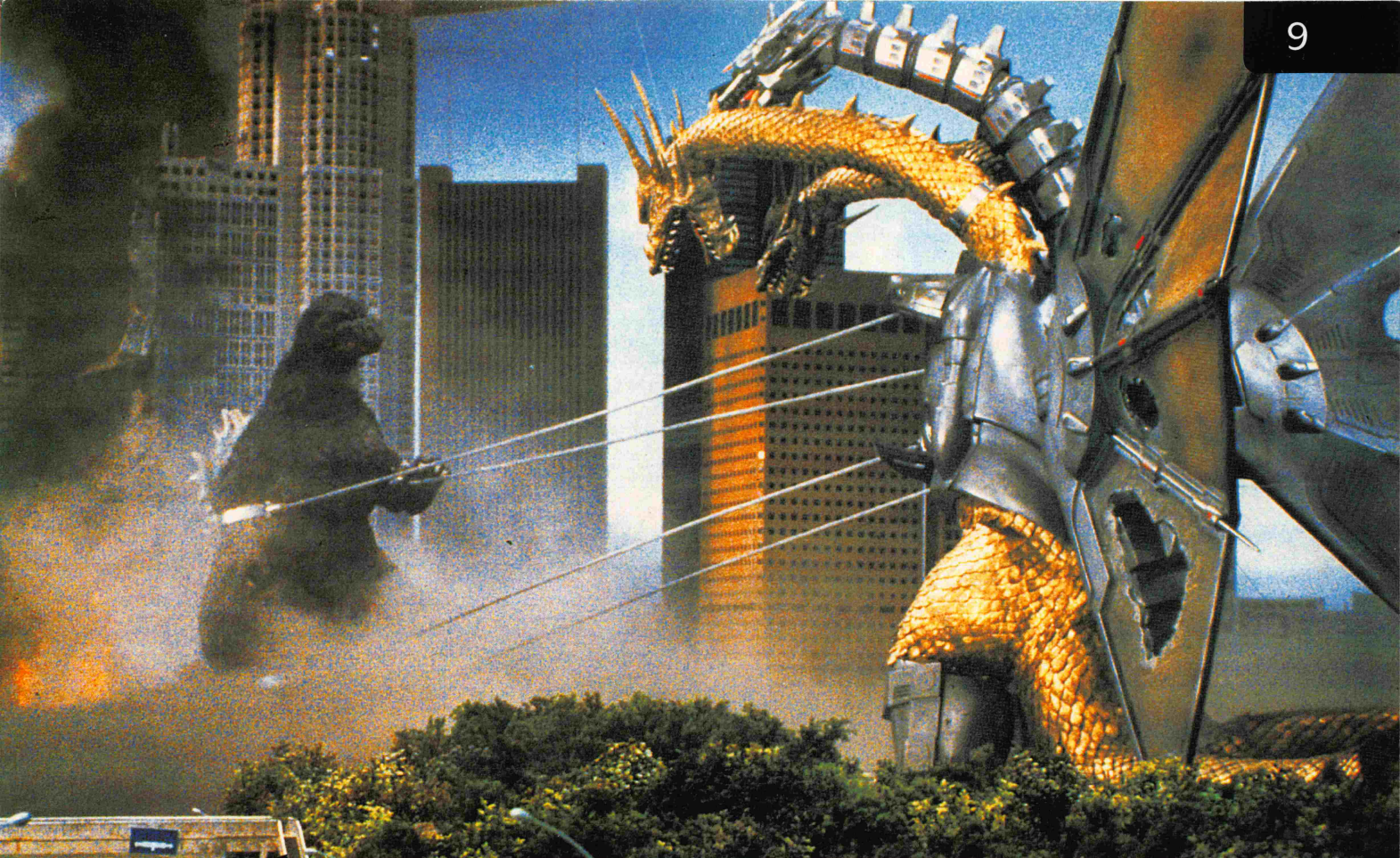
If Japan rests upon the back of a giant catfish, then the fate of its capital city belongs with another, equally fabulous creature. Ever since he first burst onto the big screen back in 1954, Godzilla has become famous for the lasting impression he has made on the Tokyo skyline. Returning to the great metropolis over and over again in well over half of the twenty-one films in which he has appeared so far, Godzilla, the undisputed king of kaiju eiga, has left it in ruins every time. A gigantic mutant dinosaur breathing radioactive fire, he was the unforeseen by-product of atomic testing in the

Pacific Ocean at a time when such tests were beginning to cause grave public concern. The year which saw the release of the first Godzilla movie was also the one in which the crew of the Japanese fishing boat "Lucky Dragon No 5" were showered with fall-out from the H-Bomb detonated on Bikini Atoll. Oblique references to this incident were subsequently incorporated into the film. However, as a true run-away child of the nuclear age, Godzilla is also subject to the Uncertainty Principle. Just as it is impossible to determine a subatomic particle's exact position, direction and velocity all at the same time, the Big G does not allow himself to be pinned down that easily. Does he represent some of kind of dark, unacknowledged obsession which the Japanese have with their own destruction, or is he just a guy in a rubber monster suit jumping up and down on a tabletop landscape pretending to shoot radioactive flame from his mouth? Godzilla has always been a monster who casts two shadows; one in the West and the other in the East. His origins reveal a strong mixture of both Japanese and American influences: conceived as a combination of two successful Hollywood monsters - Willis O' Brien's King Kong and Ray Harryhausen's Rhedosaurus in *The Beast from 2,000 Fathoms*- he was presented to the Japanese public as Gojira; a hybrid name which co-joins the Western word 'gorilla' with the Japanese 'kujira', meaning a whale. He was also quite evidently a man in a rubber suit; an aspect of the kaiju eiga genre which has never gone down particularly well with Western

audiences who tend to confuse notions of spectacle with those of realism.

A whole battery of photographic special effects, from stop-frame animation, glass shots and live-action mattes to the sophisticated digital processes of today, have established in the West a series of conventions by which cinematic illusions are judged to have become reality. Godzilla, however, has made an entire career out of failing to meet such demands, earning himself in the process a reputation for being cheap, amateurish and silly among those movie-goers who prefer bigger budgeted affairs in which computer-generated dinosaurs look real, and the actors behave as if they were stuck inside rubber suits.

The truth is that films belonging to the kaiju eiga genre were, from the very beginning, made to a completely different set of criteria. The majority of them, for example, were photographed in an anamorphic wide-screen process which, when properly projected, lent the images a greater sense of scale and depth. To add further atmosphere, the films' soundtracks were almost always recorded in stereo; an innovation which dates back to at least 1957. Presented in such a fashion, Godzilla's destruction of Tokyo - built in considerable detail at one twenty-fifth scale and filmed in slow-motion to collapse more effectively - took on a spectacular, almost theatrical, quality. Unfortunately, by the time these films reached the West, they had been scanned and panned to fit a smaller format, their



soundtracks re-recorded and rearranged, and additional scenes (usually shot on an entirely different screen ratio) had been inserted. Let's not even mention the dubbing. What was left appeared as a miserable failure to achieve a level of cinematic realism which the films had never set out to attain in the first place.

Tokyo Must Be Destroyed

But how real is real? There is a story about security guards in a Tokyo department store stopping two suspected terrorists who had been overheard animatedly discussing the destruction of the city. The dangerous subversives turned out to be veteran director Ishiro Honda swapping ideas with special effects expert Eiji Tsuburaya for a scene in what was to become GOJIRA, the first Godzilla movie.

Illusions depend a great deal upon not being in full possession of the facts. To see the kaiju eiga genre as the obsession of a culture repeatedly rehearsing its unvoiced fears of nuclear obliteration or natural catastrophe is to explain little and to obscure a great deal more. It is also an attitude based upon a very selective view of Japan's filmic output. For example, in the decade that witnessed the rise of Godzilla, films explicitly confronting Japan's continuing nuclear nightmare, such as Kaneto Shindo's CHILDREN OF HIROSHIMA and LUCKY DRAGON NO. 5, were also being released. Ishiro Honda himself had visited Hiroshima in 1946 and had wanted

to convey in GOJIRA some of the horrors which he experienced there. Unfortunately, the film's references to bomb shelters, Nagasaki and its pleas for nuclear disarmament were deleted from the English-language version by its American distributors.

Godzilla, however, had already selected a very different target for himself. It was a disaster area still waiting to happen, and each time he returned to it, he became more a part of its future than its past.

By 1945, Allied air raids had reduced most of Tokyo to smoking embers. Its predominantly wooden buildings had burned easily, resulting in the destruction of three-quarters of a million houses and the deaths of 100,000 of the city's inhabitants. A further three million were left homeless. Today, as well as being one of the principal centres of world economic activity, the greater Tokyo area also houses an astonishing 25% of Japan's entire population. This vast urban sprawl has come to be regarded by many as the ultimate megalopolis: the first city of the 21st Century. The planners and engineers responsible for its safety have also described it as a 'disaster amplification mechanism'; a



term which could just as easily be applied to Godzilla himself.

There is, however, something both reassuring and unsettling about the Tokyo which Honda and Tsuburaya had Godzilla smash so repeatedly. It never changed. No matter how far into the future the films were set, Tokyo always returned looking the same. In a universe increasingly populated by alien invaders, female psychics, killer androids and giant mecha, Tokyo's vast centre-less sprawl seemed to expand into time and space, eternally rising unchanged from its own rubble. The more Godzilla demolished it, the more it came back, determined to survive.

Mekatokyo

As Godzilla's audience became younger during the '60s and '70s, he quickly slid from atomic destroyer to cosmic avenger and science-fiction clown. After so much time spent mucking about in children's bedrooms, Godzilla had a lot of growing up to do. Literally. When Toho Films brought him back for the 1984 remake of the original GOJIRA, they had to almost double his height so that he could compete with the rise in Tokyo's skyline over the years. The Japanese capital had expanded upwards and outwards to an alarming degree, dwarfing its cinematic counterpart. "That's quite an urban renewal programme they have there," an American army major remarks of Godzilla's attack on Tokyo, but he could have been speaking about the city's actual growth-rate. An anarchic process of demolition and reconstruction, in which houses, shops and tower blocks were continually being torn down and rebuilt, had resulted in an anonymous sprawl that seemed to stretch on forever. This prompted further concerns about its safety. Planners became worried that too much of the nation's future had become concentrated into its disaster-proofed structures. There were calls for a radical decentralization of

Tokyo's functions into other parts of the country, but how do you decentralize something which has no centre?

Fragile and featureless, caught between expansion and catastrophe, Tokyo's possible futures came to dominate anime. In BUBBLEGUM CRISIS, Mega Tokyo has been rebuilt from the ruins of the old capital city after it was devastated during "the second Kanto Earthquake". Bigger and more ungovernable than ever, it is menaced by fearsome cyborgs and corporate powerplays. The series title hints at the steadily increasing state of instability that occurs the moment before the bubble bursts.

Neo-Tokyo, the setting for Katsuhiro Otomo's AKIRA, has been rebuilt after Tokyo's nuclear obliteration into a high-rise labyrinth of rioting citizens, political unrest, terrorism and full-scale gang warfare. Readers of the manga version will also know that Tokyo actually has the dubious privilege of being demolished twice during the course of Otomo's 1800-page story.

Even with a complete change of name, Tokyo's ruins are clearly identifiable. In PROJECT A-KO, the city of Graviton has been rebuilt into an unstable business community around the waters of a bay punched out of the Earth's crust by a giant spaceship that plummeted from the sky. Olympus, in Masamune Shirow's APPLESEED, is a city state that rose to prominence after a devastating global conflict and now staggers from one near-apocalyptic power struggle to the next. Newport in DOMINION, also by Shirow, is in constant danger of being transformed into a demolition derby by the Tank Police; a force sworn to protect it.

SILENT MOEBIUS takes place in a Tokyo which has managed to survive into the 21st Century without having to undergo either serious destruction or a name-change, but has swollen to enormous, unmanageably overcrowded proportions.

Seriously polluted, plagued with unbreathable air and acid rain, it has also become the arena for demonic incursions from another dimension. WICKED CITY, UROTSUKIDOJI, DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS (which features the original Kanto Earthquake) all pursue similar themes of supernatural invasion. The origins of the PATLABOR series lie in the threat to a vulnerable Tokyo of rising tidal waters caused by the Earth's global warming. Then there's CYBER CITY, TOKYO BABYLON, AD POLICE...the list, like a Tokyo streetplan, seems endless.

The Ruins of Cyberspace

In all these visions of the future, Tokyo is depicted as a major conurbation entering the 21st Century having already run out of time. It is also a city of glowing colours, rapid edits, break-neck narratives and dizzying perspectives. Whereas in the kaiju eiga genre, Tokyo was a city of details and effects, of collapse as a theatrical spectacle, anime has transformed it into a place made out of pure velocity. A product of the video age, its depth and structures are now created by the speed of an electron moving across the flat plane of a television screen. Both versions, however, depict Tokyo as a featureless urban mass. Landmarks are so rare that their appearance arouses suspicion. In the 1992 remake of GODZILLA V THE THING, Mothra cocoons Tokyo's Diet building in an ironic comment on the political scandals of the time. Its fictional counterpart, the Genom Tower, broods over Mega Tokyo in BUBBLEGUM CRISIS, and in the manga version of APPLESEED, the huge Tartarus arcology appears in frame after frame in a series of futuristic Views of Mount Fuji.

Tokyo's real landmarks are its imaginary ruins, a point well illustrated at the end of Shinya Tsukamoto's manga-influenced live-action movie, TETSUO II, where the salaryman protagonist and his fami-

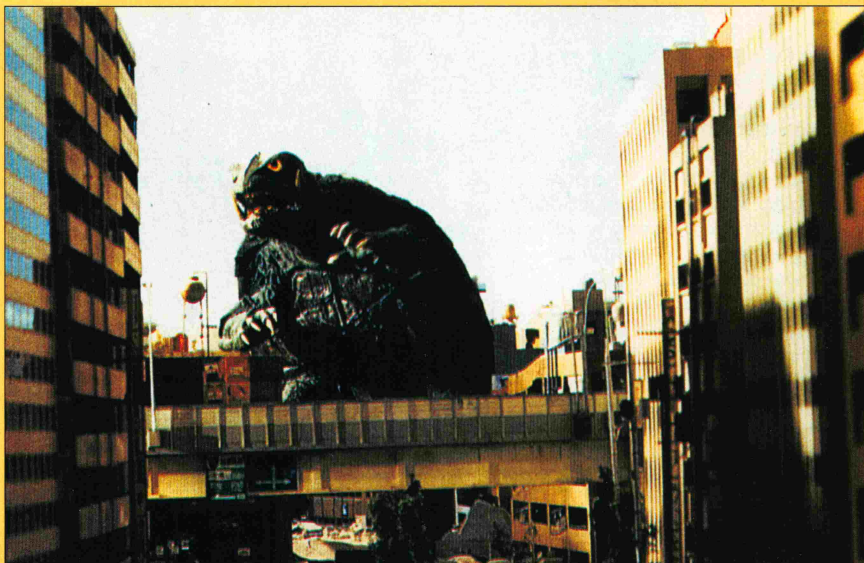
ly wander like tourists, sight-seeing among Tokyo's devastated towerblocks. The ambiguous feelings which Tsukamoto has expressed towards the city - enjoying the security of its utilities while yearning also for the wide-open spaces created by its destruction - have a counterpart in the thinking of Japan's more radical designers, such as Toyo Ito, who see Tokyo as a city whose life does not reside in its structures but in the energies that surge through them. Its true architecture, they argue, exists in the limitless profusion of temporary forms thrown up by computer links, information flows, networked images and disembodied voices. Computer animation, video-gaming and the technology of data processing have all conspired to take destruction beyond mere physical limitations. Tokyo won't become decentralized: it will dematerialize itself instead.

But while otaku use the sprawl of the Internet, a communications system originally designed to survive a nuclear attack, to swap esoteric factoids about ULTRAMAN and HELLO KITTY, there is still someone present whose influence is unmistakable. Having started it all, he will not be quickly forgotten.

One immediate response to the Kobe Earthquake was that the Nikkei Index fell by over 1,000 points in a single night. This was the result of nervous speculators fearing that Japan was about to start withdrawing capital from its investments overseas to finance the rebuilding programme. If a series of checks and balances had not previously been introduced into the system, after the computers staged their 'workers' revolt' in 1987 by automatically triggering each other into a plummeting downward spiral of panic selling, Japan's economy would have probably dropped right through the floor. Godzilla, it seems, is alive and well and ram-paging through cyberspace. Consider yourself warned.

Previous pages:
Godzilla and Mecha
Ghidora undertake
some "Urban renewal".

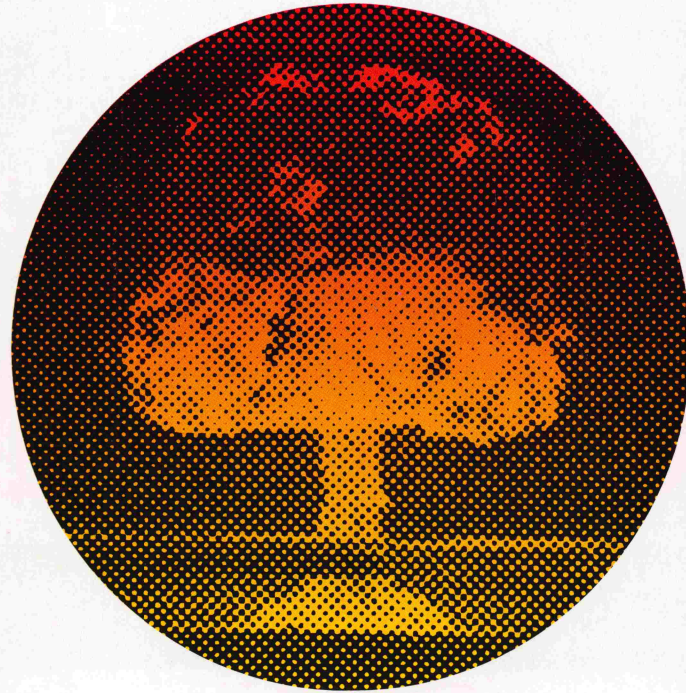
This page: Gamera
gets in on the act



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**FESTIVAL OF
JAPANESE FILM
'NO MORE HIROSHIMAS'**
*An overview of the Japanese film
festival, discussion and exhibition
on Tyneside, by guest speaker
JOSH 'ONI' CLARK*



NO MORE HIROSHIMAS

I was graciously invited by the Campaign Against Militarism to do a talk on Japanese animation and the strong anti-war message in some of their films. It proved to be an interesting experience. I have done talks before, but they were in front of conventions and group meetings and mainly people I knew, and so they would allow me some latitude in making a few mistakes; but this was a whole new experience for me, talking in front of complete strangers. There was not a soul in the crowd that day I knew, and so the screws were tightening already. But my fear was totally uncalled for as the audience was very supportive and clearly interested in the talk I gave on anime and Japanese films in general, and another talk about the rewriting of history and how racism against the Japanese was still prevalent in today's society, by Tessa Mayes, a tele-journalist from the London International Research Exchange. Film footage was provided for both talks, a clip from the Japanese animated film GRAVESTONE OF THE FIREFLIES for my talk, followed by a Second World War propaganda film made in America showing the racist aspects of the war.

Tessa's talk was very interesting, pointing to our willingness to welcome the Germans to the VE Day celebrations, but the West's total refusal to welcome the Japanese. It was very surprising to see how much both our talks had in common for the audience, when we started to bring the discussion to the floor. The audience seemed to agree that the violent imagery prevalent in the West's release of anime was really just a small proportion of a medium that provided a wide spectrum of genres and entertainment; and that the Press's negative portrayal of anime and manga was a result of some not so open conspiracy to portray the West as the moral nations and the Japanese as backward, immoral barbarians, though put across very subtly. It was also interesting to see the psychology behind it all. When we fought against the Germans, we really saw it as fighting the NAZIS, and not the German people. But when we fought against the Japanese, it was the Japanese people we were fighting against. The enthusiasm of the audience to take part and con-

tribute was overwhelming. We then pushed on to make a closing speech, in which all agreed that it was time to no longer look upon the Japanese as the enemy, but as new friends not to forget the past, but to stop living in the past, otherwise the consequences for the future could be catastrophic.

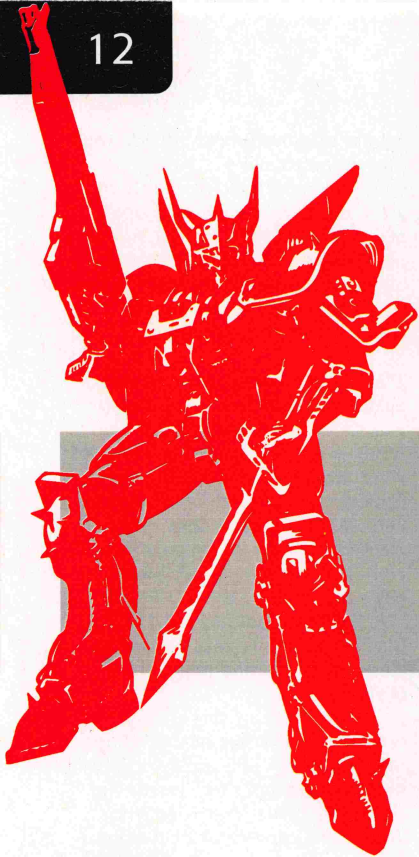
The talk had ended. My Hell was over, but it was a success. Now it was time to sell GAIJIN PRESS 'zines and I quickly sold out. People were actually asking me to sign copies, especially the oriental members of the audience, and even wanted to know if particular artwork was for sale. Other tables were occupied by the NO MORE HIROSHIMAS campaign and FORBIDDEN PLANET, which provided plenty of anime and manga merchandise.

Considering the size of the venue, the day was a real success. I noticed that even though there were a lot of people at the discussion, the seats were packed full at the actual screening of APPLE-SEED - which, I might add, ended with people asking me why there was so much swearing in the English version and none in the Japanese. There were parents present who were disappointed that they couldn't bring their children to watch it, as other than the swearing there was nothing in the film to merit a 15 certificate.

Because of our talk before the film, some people's eyes were finally opened and they began to look upon the market in a completely different light. Perhaps this is the beginning of the end of the violent pulp anime genre that has dominated the English market since it started.

After a successful day for all of us - the audience, NO MORE HIROSHIMAS, MEDIAWATCH, Forbidden Planet, Tyneside Cinema and Gaijin Press - everyone left having been both educated and entertained, with a smile on their faces. And me? Well, after three sleepless nights of preparation and a very long but enjoyable day, I did the same as the other organisers when it was over I went to the pub, got drunk, then caught the train, just like every sane hardworking editor would do. And hey, all expenses were paid, and who am I to turn down a free drink?

If you would like to know more about upcoming festivals and conferences throughout the NO MORE HIROSHIMAS campaign, contact the Campaign Against Militarism on (tel) 0171 278 9908, (fax) 0171 278 9844, (E-mail) hiro@camint.org., or write to them at: NO MORE HIROSHIMAS, Campaign Against Militarism, BM CAM, London WC1N 3XX.



ANIME IN PRINT: CPM COMICS

by JIM SWALLOW

Well known in the United States for their U.S. Manga Corps and Anime 18 video lines, Central Park Media have taken a leap into the publishing arena with the help of California-based comics house Studio Go!

The CPM Comics banner launched in Spring with full-colour books based on three of the most popular Central Park Media titles, PROJECT A-KO, GALL FORCE and M.D. GEIST. The first major line of direct anime adaptations since Comico's ROBOTECH books from the late Eighties, CPM plan to not only adapt, but to enhance the stories they draw from, hopefully drawing in new readers and new viewers by crossing over the video/comics divide.

As a long-time comics fan, the launch of this new independent comics company is an ambition fulfilled for CPM's managing director John O'Donnell, citing the translation of anime into the comics medium as a "natural move" for the company. Line editor Michael Lindsay promises a range of material expanding outward from adaptations to miniseries, sequels, prequels, and even into the realms of CD-ROM, although that project is some way away in the future. Studio Go!, the men behind the words and pictures, are Tim Eldred (artist on CAPTAIN HARLOCK, LENSMAN, BROID, CHASER PLATOON, STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE and several ROBOTECH titles), John Ott (creator of the indie superhero title SKYE BLUE) and Bruce Lewis (writer and artist on ROBOTECH: AFTERMATH). Together, the two teams are set to add a new dimension to the American 'manga' field.

CPM's first release was the graphic

novel version ("the Director's Cut") of the PROJECT A-KO movie; This fast-paced action comedy about a super-strong schoolgirl, an amnesiac alien princess, a crazed bratty genius and a whole load of mass destruction came out in 1985 and has remained a favorite of anime fans ever since, with its wacky blend of hi-jinks and schoolgirl crushes. The comics version was originally published in March of 1994 as a four-issue miniseries from another independent comics house, Antarctic Press. As their pilot release, CPM gathered the issues

together into one volume. An extra battle sequence not included in the Antarctic publication was included in the graphic novel. Following on from the graphic novel is the adaptation of PROJECT A-KO 2 ("The Plot Of The Daitokuji Financial Group"), a three-issue miniseries with pencilling, inking, coloring and lettering duties split between Eldred and Ott. As with all of CPM's adaptations, a little extra in the way of dialogue is added to the panels. As these are adaptations, the team at Studio Go! have treated them like movie novelisations - the essential

story is in place and the extra 'asides' add to the gags in a way that dubbing or subtitling never could in the animated version. With two more PROJECT A-KO movies ("Cinderella Rhapsody" and "Final") and the two-part A-KO THE VERSUS OAV series in the U.S. Manga Corps stable, CPM has ample material for further comicbook adventures and Michael Lindsay expresses his hopes to eventually adapt them all.

M.D. GEIST is CPM's "flagship" title. The Geist character in his spiky battle armor can be seen on the headers for all of U.S. Manga Corps. videos as their mascot, or 'spokesmecha'. Like PROJECT A-KO, M.D. GEIST is also a three-part miniseries, adapting the anime's story of Geist, a lone warrior in a post-apocalypse wasteland who just happens to be the military's most dangerous killing-machine; Most Dangerous, hence M.D. Geist. At the start of the story, our exiled anti-hero is rudely awakened from cryogenic sleep when the satellite he was aboard plunges down out of orbit; Surviving re-entry and the subsequent crash (tough? You better believe it!), Geist sets out across the wasted landscape of planet Jerra with his own secret and deadly agenda... Creator Koichi Ohata, who also directed GENOCYBER, and worked on GUNDAM and MACROSS II: LOVERS AGAIN, and artist Tim Eldred handle the art between them on the book, with Ohata contributing four or five splash pages per issue, as well as covers while John Ott colours and letters the book. Mike Lindsay mentions Ohata's great enjoyment at working on a comicbook version of his favourite anime creation; "He loves it!". The close relations between CPM Comics and Ohata mean that the M.D. GEIST saga will be a major part of



the CPM line for a while to come. Lindsay notes that after the first GEIST series wraps up, the second anime will brought to life in much the same way, and then the first of CPM's original stories will follow that. To hit the shelves in the later part of the year, M.D. GEIST issue #0 will be a never-before published prequel tale, penned by Ohata, covering the events leading up to the first anime OAV. The first M.D. GEIST anime is under consideration for release by Kiseki here in the UK, but fans who can't wait will be able to read the comics from June.

The third book in CPM's initial sortie is a four-issue limited series adapting the popular Artmic/Kenichi Sonoda SF adventure GALL FORCE: ETERNAL STORY. This all-girl action adventure was a smash video hit in 1986, and it sparked off a whole saga of movies and features, including two sequels and two spin-off OAV series. Art and writing comes from Bruce Lewis, and once again John Ott provides the colour and effects. ETERNAL STORY's plot follows the embattled crew of the starship Starleaf in their retreat to the planet Chaos; harried by enemy aliens (the 'Paranoid') the Starleaf girls become caught in a web of truth and counter-truth as they slowly realise they have no allies but each other... In much the same way as PROJECT A-KO, GALL FORCE: ETERNAL STORY adds a little to the plotline with extra dialogue and scenery, and with seven other GALL FORCE anime titles available, here is another ample opportunity to bring the entire GALL FORCE saga to comics.

CPM Comics triple-threat release indicates a sure approach to the comics and 'psuedomanga' market with the promise of much more to come. Often a comics company will use an adaptation licence to print a dull and lacklustre miniseries with little or no thought to presentation; CPM have made a decision to give something more than a mere screen-to-page transfer, and with the opportunities open to them there is a great margin for expansion, either through original comics or through translated manga.

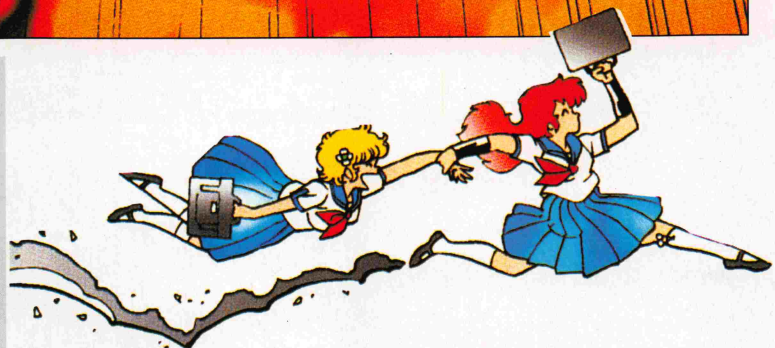
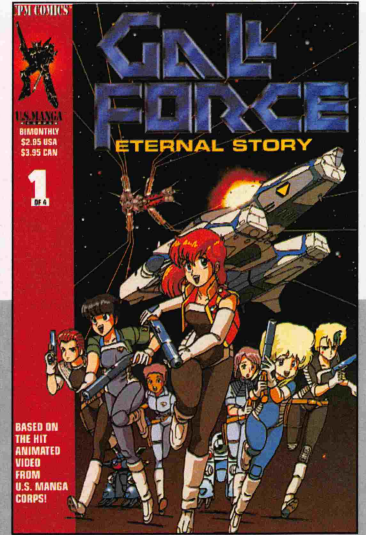
COMICOGRAPHY:

PROJECT A-KO: The Graphic Novel (collects the 4-part Malibu PROJECT A-KO miniseries) Adapted by Tim Eldred, pencils by Ben Dunn, inks by Shon Howell, colours by Albert Deschesne.

PROJECT A-KO 2 (3-issue miniseries) Adaptation and pencils by Tim Eldred, inks by Eldred & John Ott, colours and lettering by Ott.

GALL FORCE: ETERNAL STORY (4-issue miniseries) Adaptation & art by Bruce Lewis, colours and lettering by John Ott.

M.D. GEIST (3-issue miniseries) Adaptation, colouring and lettering by John Ott, pencils and inks by Tim Eldred & Koichi Ohata.



超えられるが、俺を。



《劇場用長編アニメーション》

M STREET FIGHTER II

ストリートファイターII

製作総指揮 辻本憲三 ● 監督 杉井ギサブロー ● 音楽監督 小室哲哉/鳥山雄司 ● 主題歌 篠原涼子 (EPIC・ソニー・レコード)
製作 株式会社コナミ ● 製作協力 株式会社ソニー・ミュージックエンタテインメント ● プロデュース 株式会社セテック
アニメーション制作 株式会社グループ・タック ● 配給 東映株式会社 (C) 1994 ANIPLEX CO. CCAPCOM

'94年夏、スーパーファミコンとメガドライブで「スーパーストリートファイターII」登場!!

GRAFFITI

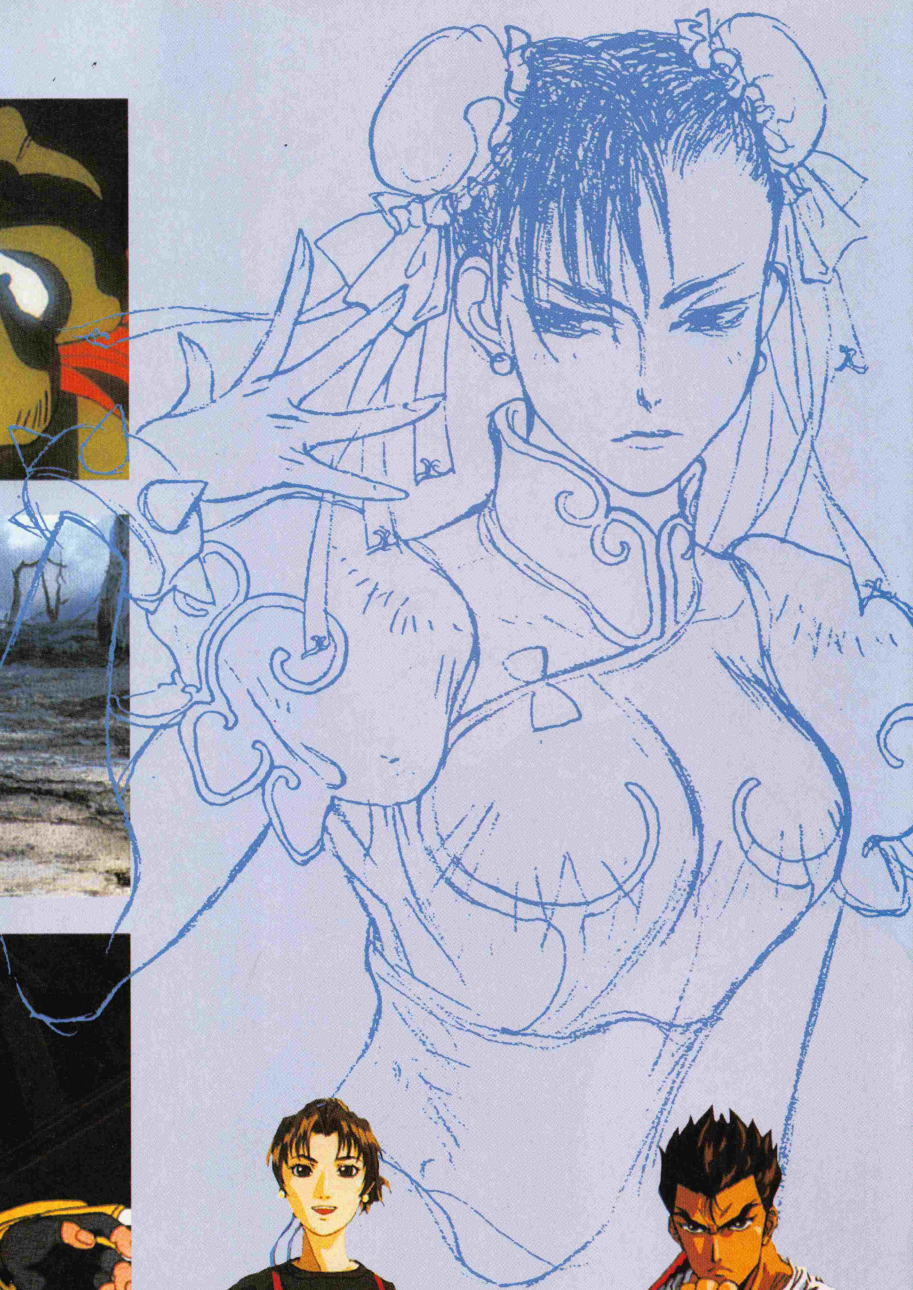
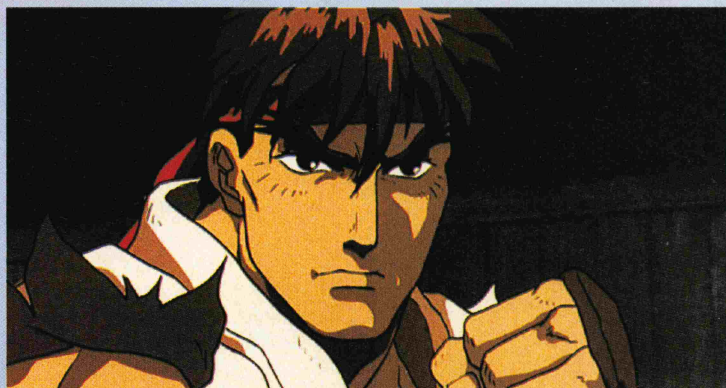
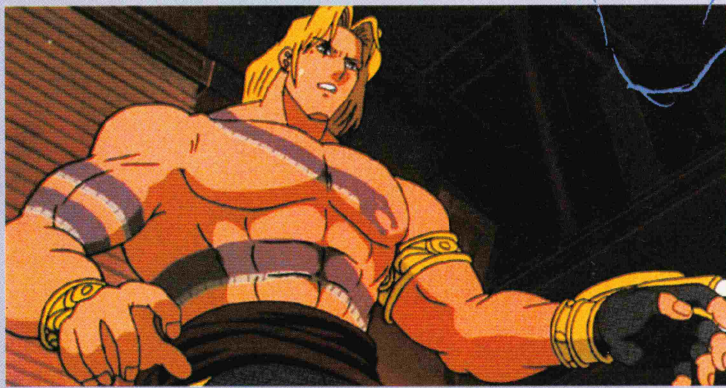
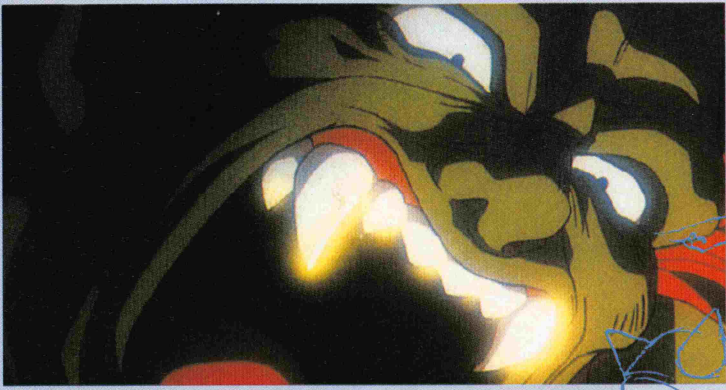
As a special forces agent for Britain's MI6, Cammy is skilled in all weapon techniques, but her body is the deadliest weapon of them all!

In our last issue we featured the animated movie versions of the world's most famous rumbles since Krakatoa last grumbled. But there's a lot more to the STREETFIGHTER II universe than the game and the movie. Here's a grab-bag of SFII goodies, put together by HELEN MCCARTHY with assistance from JONATHAN CLEMENTS and YURI FOSTER on the Acme Patent Language Unscrambler.

STREETFIGHTERS' SPECIAL MOVES

Each streetfighter has a range of special combat moves, developed through all the various game formats and featured in the anime movie. RYU and KEN have learned the same moves - the Fireball (Hadoken), Hurricane Kick (Tatsuma Sempu Kaku), Air Hurricane Kick (Kuchu Tatsuma Sempu Kaku) and fearsome Dragon Punch (Shoryuken). GUILLE's Special Forces tactics include the Somersault Kick, Inverted Flip Kick, Sonic Boom and Backbreaker. Chun Li has her famous Spinning Bird Kick, backed by the Flipping Neck Breaker, Chest Flip Kick, Head Stomp and Wall Spring. Honda's feared Hundred Hand Slap, Super Sumo Head Butt and Super Hundredkan Drop Butt come in handy when he faces Dhalsim's advanced yoga techniques - Yoga Flame, Yoga Fire, Head Spear and Drill Kick. In the battle between Blanka and Zangief, the Russian giant's Screw Piledriver, Double German Suplex and the Double Lariat and its High Speed version must match the Brazilian wildman's three roll moves - Rolling Attack, Vertical Rolling and Backstep Rolling - as well as his Electric Sender jolts. Cammy's acrobatic skills are on show with her Thigh Press, Air Thigh Press (move over Kekko Kamen!), Suplex, Spiral Arrow, Axle Spinning Knuckle and Cannon Spike. Fei Long's admiration for the great martial arts stars shows in his Raging Fire Fists (Rekka Ken) and Burning Flame Kick (Shien Kaku). Jamaican Dee Jay also admires many great entertainers and wants to be one of them, seeing his Slide Kick, Double Rolling Savate, Air Slasher and Machine Gun Uppercut as a way to become the ultimate entertainer, while T. Hawk has a less selfish motive, hoping to use

Streetfighter II © Capcom
Cammy artwork © Steve Kyte originally used by 'PC Games' (EMAP Images) re-used by kind permission of Dave Kelsall



his Tomahawk Buster, Condor Drive and Mexican Typhoon to defeat Vega and free his ancestral land from Shadowlaw's clutches. On the bad side, Balrog's elegant, refined fighting style shows the skills he learned as a matador, with his Claw Dive and Rolling Claw using those long steel fingers to back up the Air Suplex, Rolling Crystal Flash, Izuna Drop and Flying Barcelona Attack. M. Bison just barrels in there with a Head Butt, Turn Punch, Dash Straight or Dash Uppercut, while former #1 streetfighter Sagat uses the Tiger techniques - Tiger Shot, Ground Tiger Shot and Tiger Uppercut. Ultimate master Vega has the extra help of his mind-controlling Psycho Power enabling him to control his opponents' thoughts, but he also uses the Scissor Knee and Head Stomp, as well as Psycho Air Punch and Psycho Crush Attack.

STREETFIGHTER II : THE JAPANESE TV SERIES

Starting in April this year, Japanese SFII fans have been able to take a weekly look at the early lives of some of the heroes and villains involved in the SFII universe. Ryu, Ken and Chun Li are all in their teens, and the Chinese girl's parents are still alive. Cammy is a little girl of no more than ten years old, but Fei Long is already a fearsome martial artist. (This 'when we were very young' scenario has also been adapted for the new game.) With tantalising hints that this series may unravel some of the mysteries behind characters' backgrounds and motive, the hope is that new fans may be drawn into the SFII universe, while those already hooked will enjoy learning more about their favourite fighters.

The story opens when Ryu gets a letter from Ken and travels to San Francisco to join him on a world touring holiday. They are both still rookies; neither of them has yet learned their special move and they've yet to meet Guile. Arriving in Hong Kong, they book a sight-seeing trip and find that their guide is a babe called 'Spring Beauty' (Chun Li in Mandarin, but Cheun Lai in Hong Kong's usual tongue, Cantonese) working part-time for the tour company. They find a fighting contest in Kowloon and meet Fei Long for the first time. The scene is set for a love triangle between the teenage Chun Li, Ryu and Ken

STREETFIGHTER II : THE AMERICAN TV SERIES

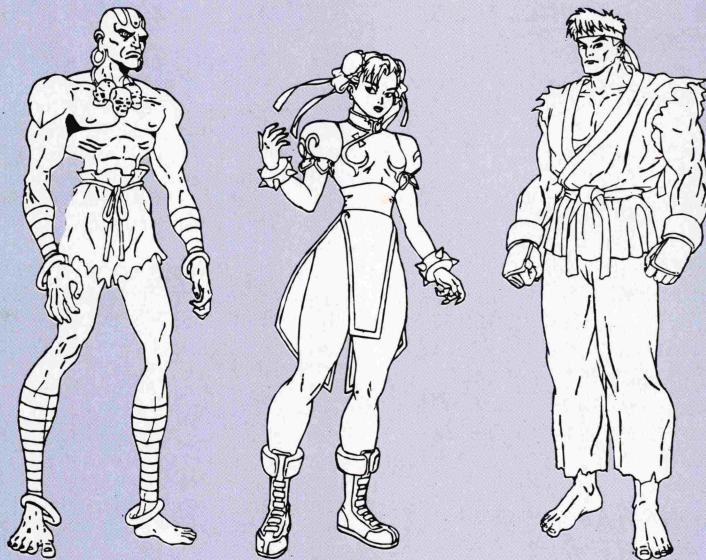
Produced by Graz Entertainment for autumn screening on the USA Cable Network, this series of 13 half-hour episodes comes from the same company producing 13 new half-hours of the G.I. JOE cartoon series. The characters have been redesigned for the US market by series producer Will Meugniot. Cammy is on the side of good, along with Chun Li, Ken, Ryu and Colonel Guile. While Dhalsim and Zangief join the bad-dies Vega, Bison, Sagat and Balrog. (Note : the characters are, of course, named for the US game version.)

STREETFIGHTER II : THE LIVE ACTION MOVIE

The 'dream team' of Jean-Claude Van Damme and Kylie Minogue hit the screens in 1994 in a live action version of the game. Guile (Van Damme) is leading an international force against a powerful megalomaniac named M. Bison (played by Raul Julia in his last role). Kylie Minogue plays his aide, Lieutenant Cammy. They are being trailed by a TV crew whose members all have a personal grudge against Bison - Chun Li (played by Ming-Na Wen), retired sumo wrestler Edmondo Honda, and Balrog. Bison is planning to take over the world, using a superpowered monster warriors; the techniques to create this warrior have been developed by Dr. Dhalsim, an Indian scientist, and the prototype monster is Guile's old Army brother Charlie, who ends up looking very much like the game's Blanka. Ryu and Ken are both on the wrong side of the law, smugglers working with international crimelord Sadat. When a deal goes wrong, they end up fighting his hired killer Vega.

As you can see, the basic structure of the game and even the nature of the characters has been bent to fit the Hollywood format. Of course, the character names also reflect the US game format rather than the Japanese. Masses of crashes, chases and explosions keep things moving but the general opinion is that it's not a patch on either the game or the anime.

AND MORE LIVE ACTION ...
A series of commercials for the SF2 games was broadcast on Japanese TV, at toy shows and



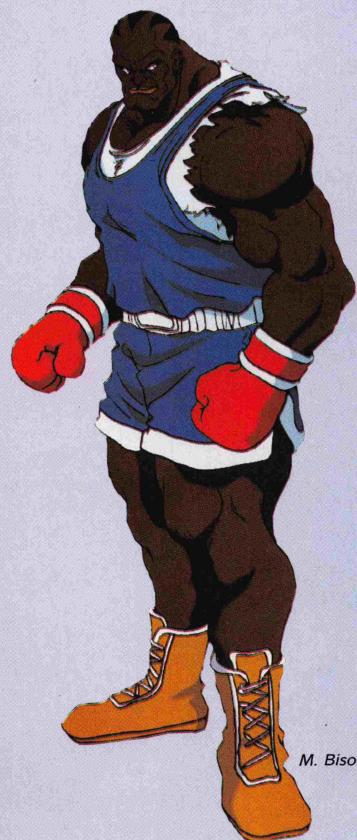
Above: US TV Streetfighters - Designs for Dhalsim, Chun Li and Ryo
Opposite page: Left hand column, top to bottom: Blanka Snarl, Ken, Balrog unmasked, T-Hawk thunders, Ryo Right hand column: Chun Li & Ryo from the Japanese SFII TV series.

cinemas before the anime film was released; they mixed actors with game graphics, but the actors were not those who eventually starred in the film. Ryu's 'SAND VERSION' opened the series for the release of the SF2 game, and there was also a version with him and Chun Li fighting. Guile promised revenge in the 'WATERFALL VERSION' for SF2 TURBO, and the MOON AND CHUN LI version, showing her training, was filmed in Thailand where it drew huge crowds. For SF DASH PLUS Balrog starred in the MASKED YOUNG NOBLE VERSION, and the arcade version of SF2X had the CHALLENGE OF CAMMY VERSION. These last four had both 15-second and 30-second cuts. A remix version with animation film and four new characters was made for the Super Famicom, and there were 8 other versions for toys shows and to promote the anime film in cinemas.

SFII MERCHANDISE

In Japan, like any other cult material, SFII has generated a wide range of merchandise from small, inexpensive stuff like stationery items, keyrings, sweets (some with cards or small toys), plastic tableware and trading cards, to more expensive items like metal or plastic figure sets, 'garage' model kits in vinyl or resin, a wide range of books (manga collection, anime guide books and game tips and cheats), and, of course, the video/laser disk release of the movie. In the West we're not so lucky, of

course. Very little domestic merchandise has been produced. One exception is the toy range from American company Hasbro, released under their 'G.I. JOE' banner. (!?!) 12 SFII characters were released as 10 cm 'action' figures, complete with weapon accessories (hardly in keeping with the spirit of streetfighting!) and even vehicles, such as Guile's Sonic Boom Tank! Ryu, Vega, Guile and Blanka were also available as traditional 30 cm G.I. JOE dolls with removable costumes. Sadly, the entire range bears little resemblance to its source material and the less said about it, the better.



M. Bison

SFII GAME RELEASE HISTORY - JAPAN

ARCADE VERSIONS

- STREET FIGHTER**
August 1987
- STREET FIGHTER 2**
March 1991
- STREET FIGHTER 2 DASH**
April 1992
- STREET FIGHTER 2 DASH TURBO**
December 1992
- SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2**
September 1993
- SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2X**
March 1994

CONSOLE VERSIONS

FIGHTING STREET PC Engine
Dec 1988
released by HUDSON, transplant of **STREET FIGHTER**

STREET FIGHTER 2
Super Nintendo June 1992
released by CAPCOM

STREET FIGHTER 2 DASH PC Engine June 1993
developed by CAPCOM, released by NEC HOME ELECTRONICS

STREET FIGHTER 2 DASH PLUS
Megadrive Sept 1992
released by CAPCOM

STREET FIGHTER 2 TURBO
Super Nintendo July 1993
released by CAPCOM

STREET FIGHTER 2 DASH
X6800 Nov 1993
released by CAPCOM

SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2 Super Nintendo, Megadrive June 1994
released by CAPCOM

SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2X
3DO June 1994
released by CAPCOM

SF2 THE MUSIC

The music directors for the film were Tetsuya Komuro and Yuji Toriyama, and the music producer was Keiichi Momose; the soundtrack, recorded by Chuji Satho with co-ordination by Yuko Yoshimi, is on Sony Records. Here's a look at some of the musicians featured on the movie soundtrack songs.

RYOKO SHINOHARA was born in 1973 in Gunma Prefecture and joined the Toyko Performance Dolls in 1990. She's made over 200 live appearances to date and started her solo career in 1992 with her single SKOL. She appears regularly on TV, radio, commercials and video. With composer T. Komuro, she sings the SFII opening theme LOVE, SUFFERING AND STRENGTH OF HEART and closing theme Good Luck.

KOISHISA TO SETSUNASA TO KOKOROZUYOSA TO (Love, Suffering and Strength of Heart) and **GOOD LUCK** - words, composition and arrangement by **TETSUYA KOMURO** (Epic Sony Records)

ALPH-LYLA first became known in 1988 as **ALPH Lyla wa Lyla**, and changed their name to its current form in 1991. Veterans of many albums and a couple of lineup changes, the group with its new vocalist Fusako Matsuoka have supplied the background track **BURNED BY THE HEAT** for the SFII anime movie, and their arrangements have featured on the soundtracks for games including **SUPER SFII**, **ECOLOGICAL**, **ROCKMAN II** and **SFII**.

KIZUTSUKINAGARA ATSUKUNARE (Burned by the Heat), words by **SATOMI TOZAWA**, composition by **ALPH-LYLA**, arrangement by **ALPH-LYLA** with **YUJI TORIYAMA**.

BIG LIFE were formed in 1993 by former Unicorn guitarist Isamu Dejima as a 'rock unit', with all members contributing to the compositions. The single **CRY** which appears on the SFII soundtrack was originally released in July 1994, followed by their debut album **FIRST RECORDING** and a national tour.

CRY, words by **ISAMU DEJIMA**, composition by **NAOTADA SUHARA**, arrangement by **BIG LIFE** (Sony Records)

SFII THE ANIMATION - CAST AND CREW

CAST

RYU	Kojiro Shimizu
KEN	Kenji Haga
CHUN LI	Miki Fujitani
GUILE	Masane Tsukayama
FEI LONG	Masakatsu Funaki
DJINZO	Matsuo
CAMMY	Yoko Sasaki
T. HAWK	Syozo Izuka
E.HONDA	Daisuke Gouri
DHALSIM	Masayuki Kishino
BLANKA	Unsho Ishikuza
ZANGIEF	Tetsuo Kanao
OLD MAN	Shuo Otsuka
BALROG	Kaneto Shiozawa
SAGAT	Shigezo Sasaoka
M.BISON	Jyoji Nakada
ELIZA	Hiromi Tsuru
MC	Masayoshi Nagasawa
MASTER GIRL	Hideyo Amamoto
SOLDIER A	Machiko Toyoshima
MAN C	Yoshiyuki Kono
VOICE ON PHONE	Yasunori Masutani
VTOL PILOT	Makiko Omoto
VEGA	Jun Shiichi
	Takeshi Kusaka

CREW

DIRECTOR	Gisaburo Sugii
PRODUCER	Kenichi Imai
PRODUCTION	SEDIC
SCENARIO	Kenichi Imai, Gisaburo Sugii
MUSIC DIRECTORS	Tetsuya Komuro, Yuji Toriyama
PLANNING	Takeshi Sekiguchi, Megumi Sugiyama, Mitsuhsa Koeda
ORIGINAL IDEA	CAPCOM
GENERAL DIRECTOR	Kenzo Tsujimoto
PRODUCTION CO-OPERATION	Sony Music Ent.
ANIMATION PRODUCTION	Group TAG
PRODUCTION	Hiroshi Inagaki, Akio Sagai
GENERAL DESIGN DIRECTOR	Yasuhiro Oshima
CHARA DESIGN	Shuko Murase
VISUAL EFFECTS ANIMATION	Isamu Imagake
FIGHT DIRECTOR	Shinichi Shoji
COMPUTER ANIMATION	Yasuo Maeda
ART DIRECTOR	Satoru Matsuoka
FILM DIRECTOR	Hiroaki Emitsu
SOUND DIRECTOR	Atsumi Tashiro
ANIMATION PRODUCER	Ken Fujita, Ikuo Sato
ANIMATION CO-OPERATION	AIC, Oh! Production

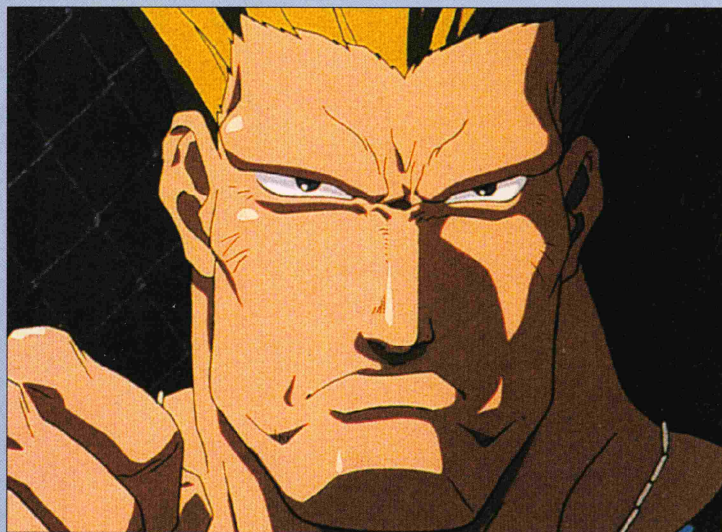
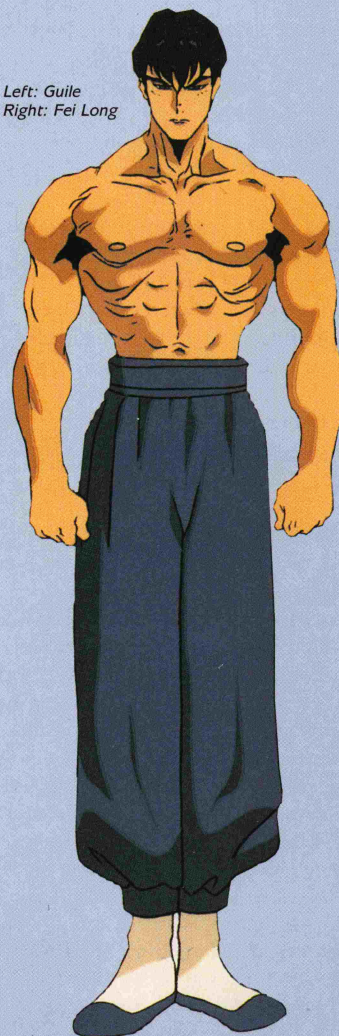
Also included in the huge list of groups and individuals who worked on the production are Shaft, Anime World Osaka, Studio Victory, Imagine, Ethno Animation, Bunsei Animation, Khojin Animation, Han-Wool, Studio CATS, Studio Boggy, Studio Mike, Studio Sunny, Studio Mum, Tokyo Animation Center, Group Then, Angle, Group Donguri, Asaiado, Studio Gallop, Imagica and Maki Production.

MISSION PLAN CORRECTIONS -SFII ERRATA

The Acme Patent Type Confuser was hard at work in last issue's captions; if you spotted the mistakes in the Street Fighters' personal data, award yourself ten brownie points and a Shadowlaw promotion. Here are the corrections, with all measurements in centimetres :

KEN has bloodtype B, not O.
CHUN LI's vital statistics are bust 88 - waist 58 - hips 90, not 88 - 5890. **VEGA** was born on April 17, not April 14, and his stats are 129 - 85 - 92, not 12985 - 91. Luscious **BALROG**'s personal dimensions are 121 - 73 - 83, not 121 - 73 - 84, while **M. BISON** measures 120 - 89 - 100, and **FEI LONG** has stats of 108 - 76 - 80, not 108 - 7680. **ZANGIEF** was born in 1956, not 1966, while **CAMMY** is ten years younger than we made her, born in 1974, not 1964, She's not speaking to us right now because we also claimed she weighed 64 kilos, not her true svelte 46 kilos, and her stats are 86 - 57 - 88, not 88 - 57 - 88. Finally, **T. HAWK** measures a majestic 144 - 98 - 112, not 14498 - 112.

Left: Guile
Right: Fei Long



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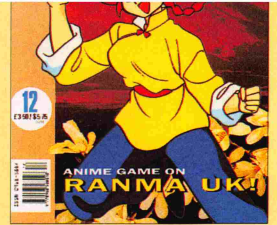
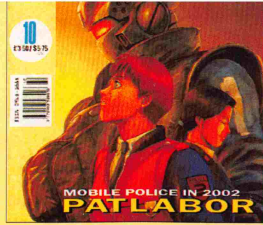
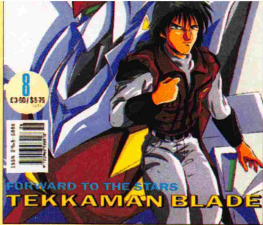
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8
Series overview: TEKKAMAN BLADE, ORGUSS, Anime in Europe, video-games, AH! MY GODDESS

9
Series overview: ARISLAN, RG VEDA, GAIARTH; Japanese-Indian co-production RAMAYANA

10
US conventions, interviews, Series overview: SOL BIANCA, DEVIL HUNTER YOKO, PATLABOR 2 the movie

11
U.S. manga, TENCHIMUYO!, Series overview: MYSTERIOUS CITIES OF GOLD, Anime music

12
PORCO ROSSO, Homage to Tezuka Osamu, Series Overview: BATTLE ANGEL ALITA, DOMINION 2, US Fandom



13
DAGGER OF KAMUI, PLASTIC LITTLE, How Anime is Made, DRAGONBALL Z the Game, Anime Exam

14
KO CENTURY BEAST WARRIORS, Toren Smith interview, Series Overview: GUNBUSTER, URUSEI YATSURA

15
Series Overview: ANIMATED CLASSICS, YUUGEN KAISHA, Spanish fandom, Fred Schodt interview,

16
Manga as Art, WINGS OF HONNEAMISE, MOLDIVER, anime costuming in Japan, Nobuteru Yuuki interview

17
TAIHO SCHICHAUZO!, The Lion King controversy, Anime Cyberpunk, WARRIORS OF THE WIND,

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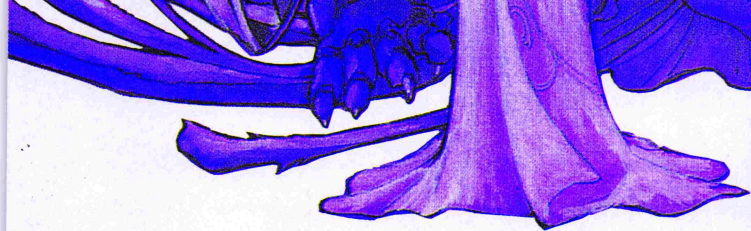
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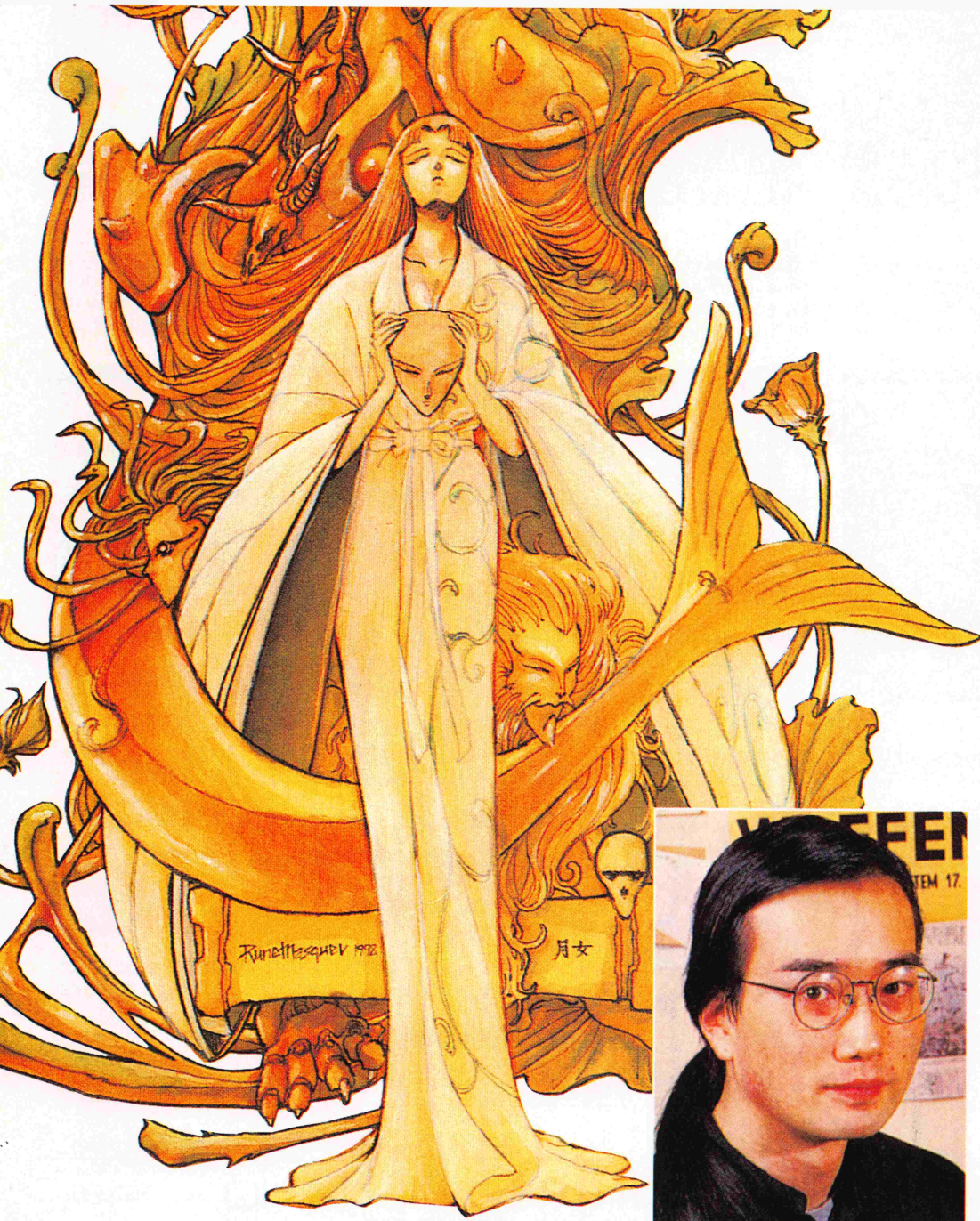
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HOWEVER he found time to design the mecha for **ASSEMBLE INSERT**, another Yuki creation (although more in the tradition of his 'parody' work than the realistic **PATLABOR**). The **GUNDAM** connection continued through 1990 with work on **WAR IN THE POCKET**, **SPECIAL MOBILE SUIT SD GUNDAM** and **GUNDAM MK-IV**, but he also developed his character design skills further with the character concepts for **RECORD OF LODOSS WAR**, contributed to design on **SILENT MOBIUS** and produced more **PATLABOR** design. His most recent

YUTAKA IZUBUCHI



ended into his high school years, when **SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO** captured his attention and he began to attend sf conventions and produce his own sf artwork. His talent caught the eye of a TV animation director and he made his professional debut in 1978 with mecha in the TV movie **ROBO GENERAL DAIMOS**. Over the next decade he worked as a contributing designer or mecha designer on such shows and films as **DARTANIAS**, **TRIDER G-7**, **GOD SIGMA**, **XABUNGLE GRAFFITI**, **DYNAMAN**, **PANZER WORLD GALIENT**, **AURA BATTLER DUNBINE** and the two definitive classic titles of the period, **SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO** (the third movie and **FINAL YAMATO**) and **MACROSS** (on **DO YOU REMEMBER LOVE?**). During this time he met Masami Yuki and became a driving force in the team that brought the **PATLABOR** concept to fruition.

In 1988, as well as his work on **PATLABOR**, Japanese viewers could see his mecha designs on show in **STARSHIP TROOPERS**, **CHAR'S COUNTERATTACK** and the wacky **SD GUNDAM**, but he also contributed to **CHAR'S COUNTERATTACK** as a character designer and animation co-ordinator. And the following year, despite work on the **PATLABOR** TV series and **PATLABOR THE MOVIE** he found time to design the mecha for **ASSEMBLE INSERT**, another Yuki creation (although more in the tradition of his 'parody' work than the realistic **PATLABOR**). The **GUNDAM** connection continued through 1990 with work on **WAR IN THE POCKET**, **SPECIAL MOBILE SUIT SD GUNDAM** and **GUNDAM MK-IV**, but he also developed his character design skills further with the character concepts for **RECORD OF LODOSS WAR**, contributed to design on **SILENT MOBIUS** and produced more **PATLABOR** design. His most recent



YUTAKA IZUBUCHI

anime work has been on **MOBILE POLICE PATLABOR MOVIE 2** and **VOTOMS**.

During his career his skills have been used to enhance TV series, films and OAVS in anime and live action, but he has recently begun to publish his first manga series, **RUNE MASQUER**, in which his love of Celtic history and mythology (first seen in his work for **RECORD OF LODOSS WAR**) is clearly apparent.

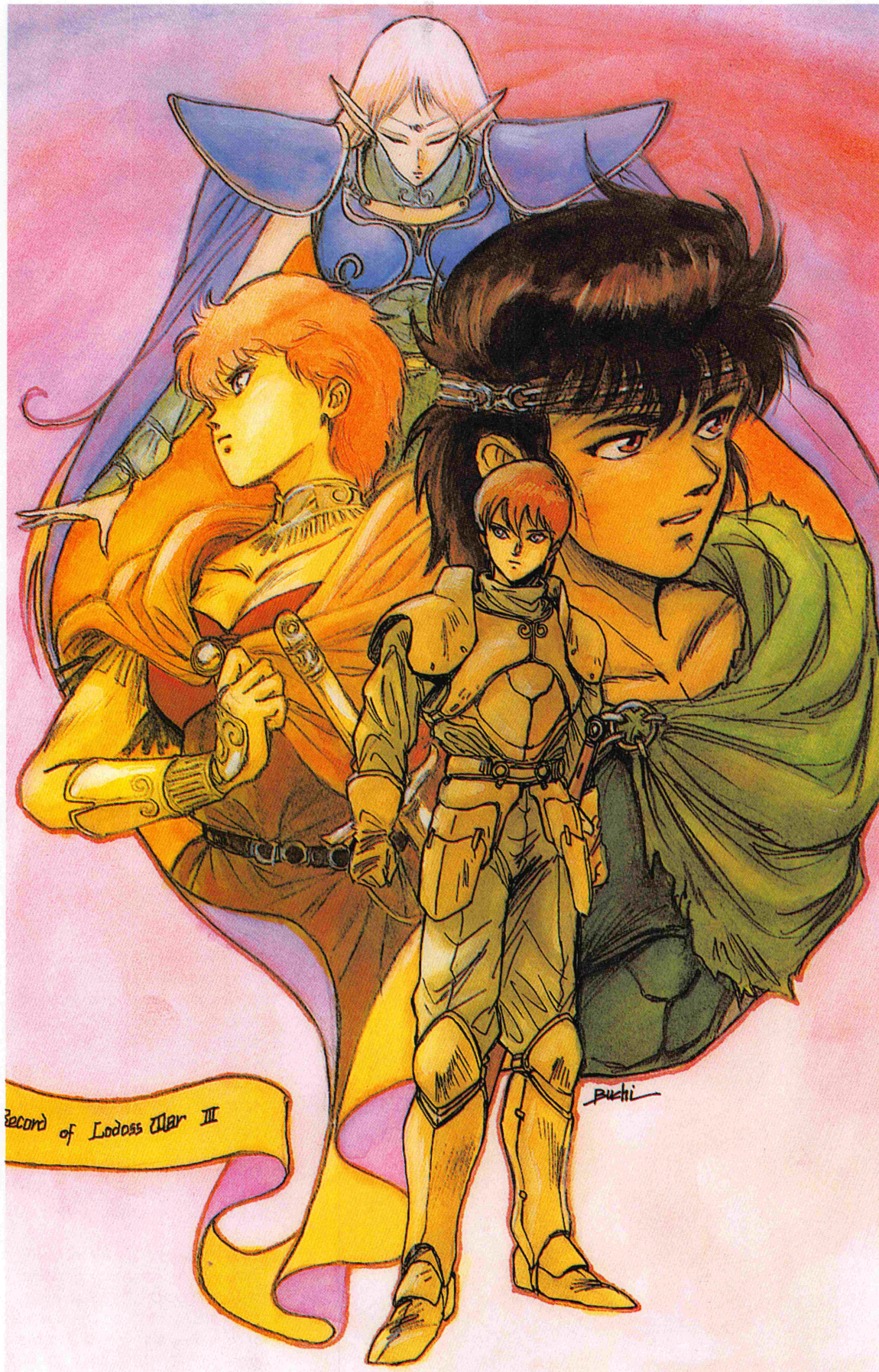
Among his favourite Western illustrators are Brian Froud, Allan Lee and the Spanish artist Segrelles

Mr. Izubuchi was a Guest of Honor at I-CON in New York State in April 1995 where, despite being very busy and in great demand from convention attendees and fellow professionals alike, he made time to give this brief interview to AUK's **HELEN MCCARTHY**. Many thanks to **YOUNG HWAL SON** of Central Park Media for translating.

First of all, Helen presented Mr. Izubuchi with copies of **ANIME UK**. After glancing through them he remarked that he thought the design and layout were very good, and was interested to see a Western magazine covering such matters as costume play and dojinshi. Then the interview began, and despite some interruptions from convention attendees eager to get his autograph Mr. Izubuchi was helpful and charming throughout.

AUK : You've been involved in anime design since 1978. How did you get started, and what inspired you to start?

YI : Well, I was interested in sf and designing as a hobby and wanted to make it my career, but I had planned to go to college first and get some qualifications. However when a director saw my portfolio and offered me some part-time work as a designer, my parents encouraged me to go ahead, even though that would mean I didn't go to college. So with their encouragement I began to get involved professionally in anime design. The four years which I would have spent at college, I spent on working and improving my skills, and so I got an early start in the industry. Now, I think maybe it was just as well, because I don't think I could have become a salaryman like many college graduates!



Above: Record of Lodoss War Opposite page: Rune Masquer

THE STORY SO FAR

Left: Noa Izumi of Patlabor.
 Right: 'Protect Gear' Armour from
 'Kerberos Panzer Cops'.
 Far right: Forerunner of Lodoss
 War's Deedlit? from 'Aura
 Phantasm'.
 Below: The Black Knight Ashram
 from Lososs War.
 Bottom of page: Rune Masquer



AUK : What were your favourite anime shows?

YI : I was really inspired by shows like YAMATO, shows with strong stories and exciting events. When I saw shows like GUNDAM and SUNBOT 3 and DARTANIAS, I was really excited by them, even though the animation was maybe not so good then as it is today. I think some modern anime shows have lost those old storytelling values.

AUK : In some of the anime you have worked on, like PATLABOR, the stories and the character developments are very strong, even though maybe the stories themselves are not so dramatic. Do you have a personal favourite among the shows you've worked on so far?

YI : Well, in most cases, by the time I was brought onto the team as a designer the script was already written and the story and 'feel' of the project already fixed. This is where a designer's job normally starts. But on PATLABOR I was involved all the way from the planning stages; in fact, I even receive royalties on the show for my contribution! So PATLABOR is my biggest favourite, because I was more involved.

AUK : I understand you know Mr. Yuki quite well?

YI : Yes, we've been friends for years. I hope we'll soon be working on another project together.

AUK : Many Western fans want to know if there is any prospect of more LODOSS WAR stories? After all, Mr. Mizuno created a lot of scenarios and stories and there are eight LODOSS novels ...

YI : (laughing) Yes, there are still a great many untold LODOSS WAR stories, and if a new series is made I hope to be one of the first on the team!

AUK : What are you working on at present?

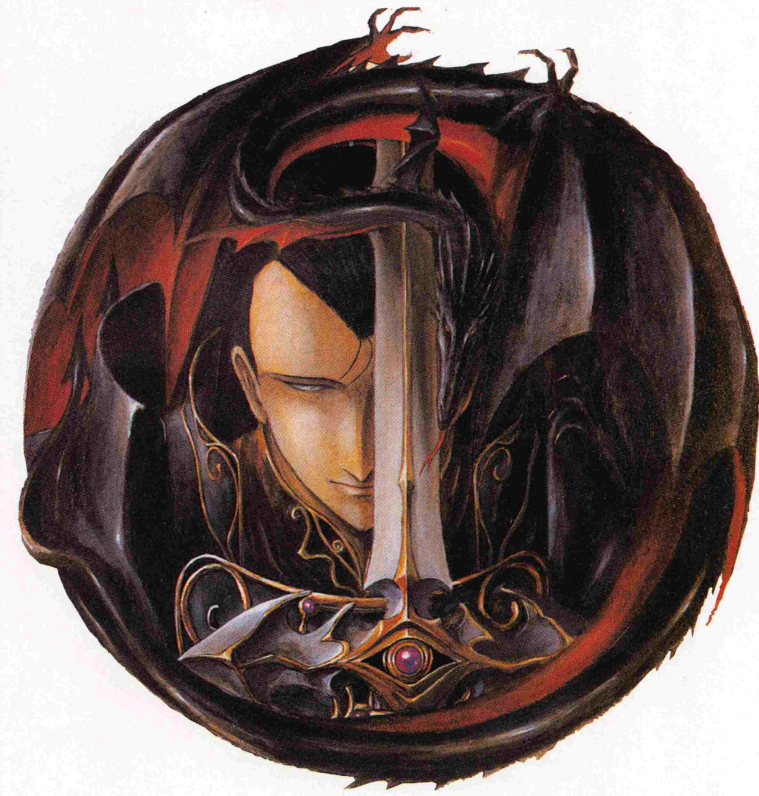
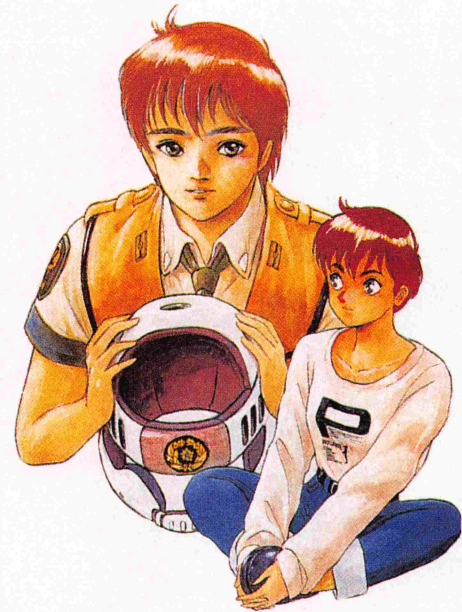
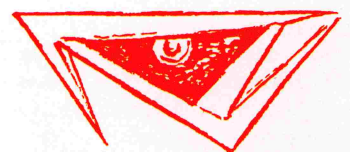
YI : I'm in the early stages of discussion on two titles. One of them may be a TV series, one is a possible OAV series. But it's still at a very early stage, so I can't give any titles or any definite information.

AUK : Do you have a 'dream project' - something you would really like to work on?

YI : No, I don't really have one. Rather than having a big dream to aim at, I prefer to take the various interesting projects that come along and do the best I can on them. After all, if I did have a dream project and I was lucky enough to be able to accomplish it, I wouldn't have any further creative ambitions, so there would be no incentive to achieve anything new!

Now I have a question for you. I am fascinated by English and Irish mediaeval history, and the English and Celtic myths, tales like King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table and Irish legends like Cuchulain. Through my design work on RECORD OF LODOSS WAR, and now in RUNE MASQUER, I've tried to reflect this and to convey my love for Celtic legend and for this period of history. Do you think I've succeeded?

AUK : Looking at your work in RECORD OF LODOSS WAR and at the pages of RUNE MASQUER with their beautiful costumes, settings and characters, I would say that you have most certainly succeeded, and I'm sure all your fans will agree! Mr. Izubuchi, thank you very much for all the pleasure your work has given to all your fans, and thank you for talking to us today.



Anime, Bulletin Boards and the INTERNET - A guide for the clueless.

by Geoff Cowie

With more and more references to the INTERNET in the media, and with articles in anime magazines appearing with cryptic code addresses appended, you will probably be aware of the Net, but how easy is it to get hooked up and what actual use is it to anime fans? Is the Information Superhighway as great as the hype suggests? This article is intended as a primer on the NET, with particular emphasis on the resources available to anime fans.

WHAT IS IT?

Some thumbnail definitions first:

The INTERNET: a worldwide network of computers (belonging to commercial, government and academic institutions) interconnected by a web of high-speed data links and containing a mass of information in the form of text, programmes and graphics. BBS.

BULLETIN BOARD SYSTEMS are usually run by amateurs and must be dialled direct, but as with the INTERNET, the remote computer can be manipulated by the user as if s/he were seated beside it. BBS's often have message and file areas dedicated to specific hobbies or interests, and yes, there are anime BBS maintained by enthusiasts.

GATEWAY: an INTERNET service provider will link you to the INTERNET for a monthly fee. For connection, dial their system and enter your password.

E-MAIL: with an account on an INTERNET service provider comes an unique electronic mailbox number. Your mail can be sent to the far side of the world in seconds, and replies wing their way back to your mailbox. You log into your service provider to retrieve the mail.

FTP: File Transfer Protocol - lets you download INTERNET files.

GIF: Internet graphics file format.

FIDONET: Low-cost amateur communication network between participating BBS.

WHAT USE IS IT?

The INTERNET and BBS are all about information. The Bulletin Boards, as the name suggests, can be used for noticeboard-type communication with other anime enthusiasts. They also hold resource files that are free and can be downloaded to a home computer.

Some of the big Service Providers like Compuserve are essentially BBS on a grand scale. Compuserve has 2 million members worldwide, including Japan, and you find some of these people active on the Anime and Japan discussion forums. On the INTERNET proper you can find still vaster resources.

Here are some of the resources you can find via a BBS, Service Providers or the INTERNET:

E-mail.

English-language fan scripts for Japanese-language anime and manga. All sorts of discussion and message forums to do with anime and manga, and mailing lists (you get E-mail) from same.

Worldwide search for named files using the "Gopher" program. Japan forum.

Anime Picture files in GIF format.

List of fan tape-subtitlers. Articles about Japan & anime-related topics.

Lists of 'Shopping in' (enter name of country/major city)

Fan-written stories and scripts.

TECHNICAL STUFF

So, what do you need to get connected?

In essence, you need a desktop computer equipped with a modem and communications software. Any such machine should suffice for initial experiment.

For more serious work an Amiga, Macintosh or PC-compatible is preferred. All of these are well-supported with software and accessories. Note that communications is NOT a demanding application for a home computer. Mailing and file acquisition are text-based, not graphic. So, if you can't afford anything else, the hard disk equipped PC-XT compatibles now scorned and available for next to nothing will be almost as effective as the current

486 PCs (designed for multimedia and advanced graphics). Note however that the World Wide Web, rapidly increasing in popularity, IS graphics-based. To the computer you will add specialised comms. software like TELIX (shareware), and your Internet service provider's software offerings. Get the fastest modem you can afford; this should be at least 14400 baud speed.

Almost all new desktop computers have preloaded software which includes a communications program.

In the "useful to have" category an "off-line reader" programme (actually an automatic calling and tasking programme) will save you time and money when collecting your mail, downloading files and so forth. Some means of listening to the phone line is also helpful.

MORE ON BULLETIN BOARDS

Gaining access to a BBS is easy and uncomplicated, and an obvious move is to call a local board to check out your modem and software. Don't panic! Most operate in the same menu-driven way; first-time callers answer a questionnaire. Please, quit via the menu, not by pulling the phone plug!

Downloading a file listing and logging on again to download a file is likewise fairly quick and straightforward.

The amount of UK BBS space devoted to anime is relatively small. The GOTHIC BBS, which seemed to be the best, is offline at the time of writing, but as the filebase is intact it may be worth contacting the 'sysop', Andrew Cunningham, 1 Burden St, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 1JH; tel 01509-237963. Alpha Complex BBS and Imperial BBS also have files. Centronics BBS is an active FIDONET node for anime fans.

The US situation is much better, with about a dozen specialist anime BBS, so if you have a fast modem and are not deterred by the connection costs (about £30 per hour) you can access a large quantity of script and GIF files quickly and with little trouble. An 'off-line reader' would be useful.

Some bulletin boards offer a cheap subscription E-mail service. Try to find one in your local area.

INTERNET

The INTERNET does contain vast amounts of anime-related information. However, contrary to the hype created by excited journalists,

finding what you want may be neither quick, nor easy, nor cheap. The INTERNET is not directly accessible by home computer users, and as it was never intended as a public network, it isn't user friendly. Nor is it well documented; there is no comprehensive index, and it changes so rapidly and anarchically that there never will be a satisfactory index. The NET archives are surprisingly useless as a research tool; generally the quickest way to get a particular query answered is to post a question on one of the forums and hope somebody can help.

Finding a file ought to be quick but we can attest that in practice it can take hours.

Learning how to use the INTERNET can be a hard and frustrating exercise in itself, and many users then become INTERNET junkies, spending hours at the keyboard each week and spending substantial sums on connection charges. One cannot avoid the conclusion that for many users it is more of a hobby than a tool.

Home computer users connect to Internet by subscribing to a connection service such as Compuserve, Demon, Cix etc. Note that the interface design and degree of Internet connection does vary. Specialised software is available to buffer users from the worst horrors of the Internet, such as cryptic instructions in which the exact positioning of commas is vital. Compuserve has the best anime forums. Hopefully, your chosen service or Mercury will have a connection or call forwarding point in your area, so you only have to pay the cost of local telephone calls, not trunk or international.

To get the most out of the INTERNET: make use of forums of interest to you, and ask for information (but note that answers to FAQ's - Frequently Asked Questions - are often available as a file). Subscribe to a mailing list. Find out where the anime sites are, index them and download the stuff you want.

All this costs money. The connection services may sound affordable but expenditure (inc BT charges) of £30 a month is more typical.

On the plus side, the service played a major role in organising our holiday in Japan, in contacting one or two special interest groups, and in finding a batch of 70 VIDEO GIRL AI files. It's certainly a handy way of finding fellow enthusiasts and of keeping in touch.

Is the INTERNET worth it? This depends on your circumstances.

Do you like computers? Do you really want all that information? And how much time, trouble and expense is it worth to you to get it? To a fair extent you can choose the depth of your involvement; for instance E-mail service is obtainable cheaply via many BBS, e.g. our local STILL SMOKIN (01908-694864).

FURTHER READING

Do read the monthly Internet magazines. There are also many Internet books, computer books and mags. We recommend "The Internet for Dummies." by Levine & Baroudi, ISBN 1568840241, £17.99

WHERE TO DIAL

There follows a list of numbers for BBS and FTP sites etc. Such lists rapidly go out of date; however BBS and FTP sites often maintain lists of FTP sites and BBS numbers, so once you reach one you can find others.

SD BBS (Atlanta) USA,
(0101)(404)-333-8554

Arctic Animation (Canada):
Prototype generation BBS
(0101)(604) 254-1833

Test Pattern BBS
(0101)(604) 855-4183

Centronics (UK)
01473-273246 (major node for
Fidonet anime messages).

Alpha Complex (UK)
01224-626203

Imperial (UK)
01322-556325

Find your local BBS in INTERNET & COMMS mag. issue #1, etc. FTP sites: see e.g. ANIMEFTP.TXT file in GOTHIC BBS anime script file area.

The prime anime FTP site seems to be venice.tcp.com which has a huge selection of anime scripts, images and even sound samples. Berkeley is no longer an anime FTP site.

FTP: ftp.tcp.com

USENET: rec.arts.anime

USENET: rec.arts.manga

Fidonet: ANIME

Compuserve: GO COMICS or GO JAPAN

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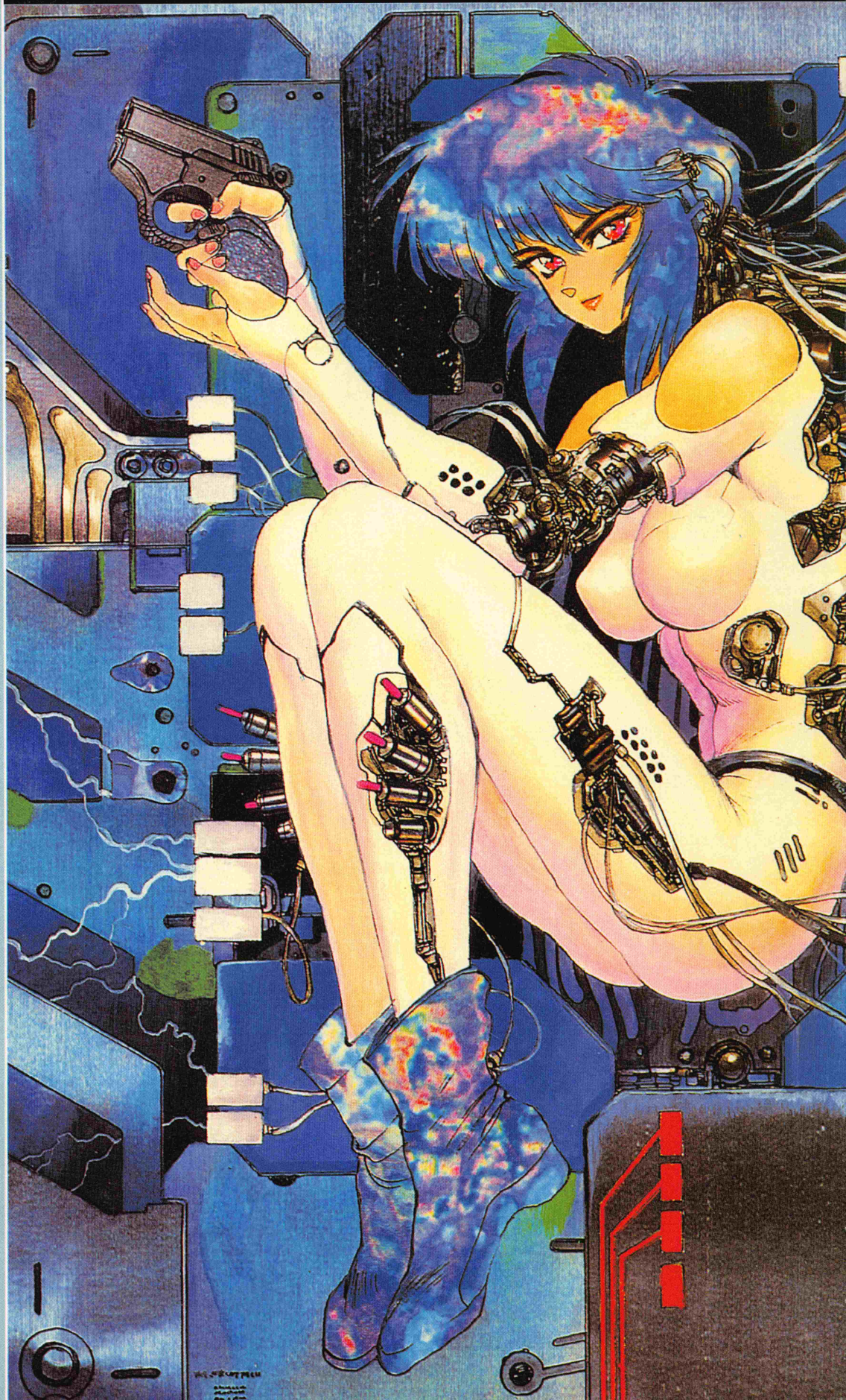
WWW Page:

<http://www.cs.ubc.ca/spider/edmonds/anime/artic/html>

STOP PRESS

For list of 100+ U.S. anime BBS,
E-mail: pearl@remus.rutgers.edu

It is now possible to buy completely installed and logon-ready INTERNET PCs. INTERNET service provider Demon became so popular with novice users earlier this year that services were jammed until Demon could provide more lines. Watch out for an INTERNET cafe in your town.



GHOST IN THE SHELL

"In the near future corporate networks reach out to the stars and electrons and light flow throughout the universe.

The advance of computerization, however, has not yet wiped out nations and ethnic groups."

WORK IN PROGRESS

From Peter Evans of Sakura Studio, a special feature on one of the hottest titles currently in production in Tokyo :

GHOST IN THE SHELL

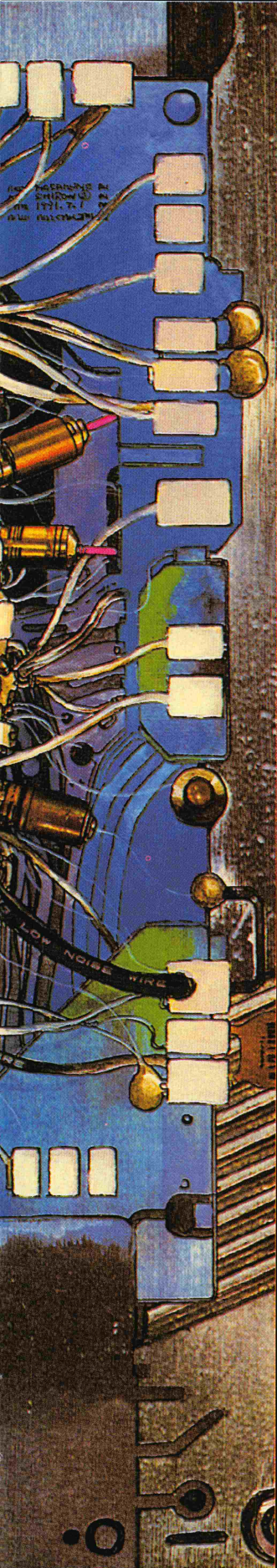
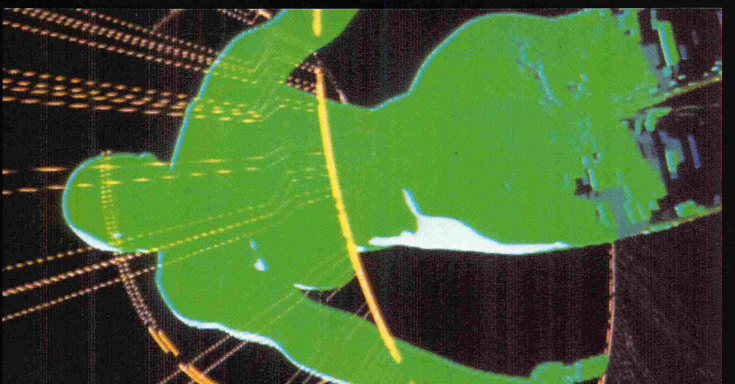
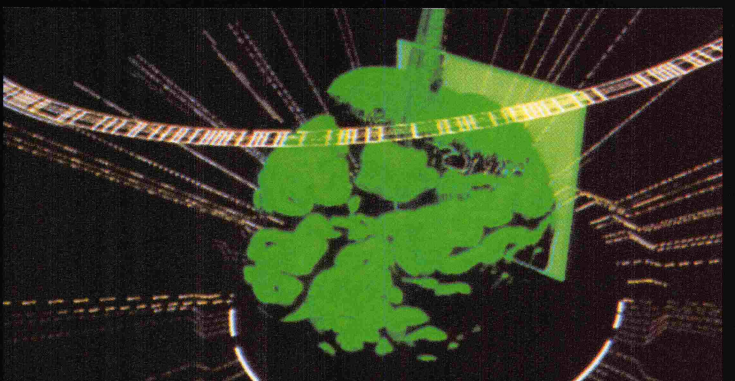
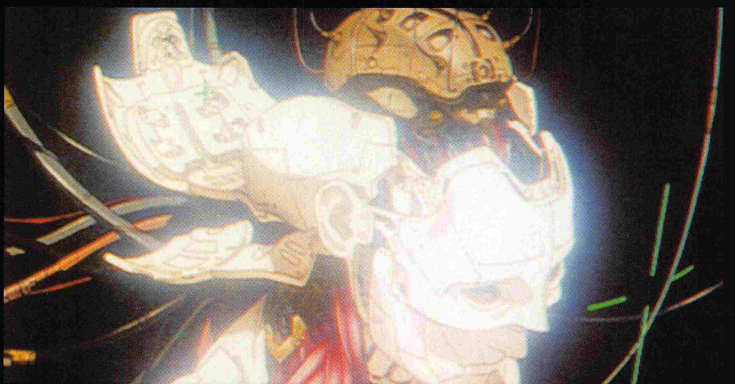
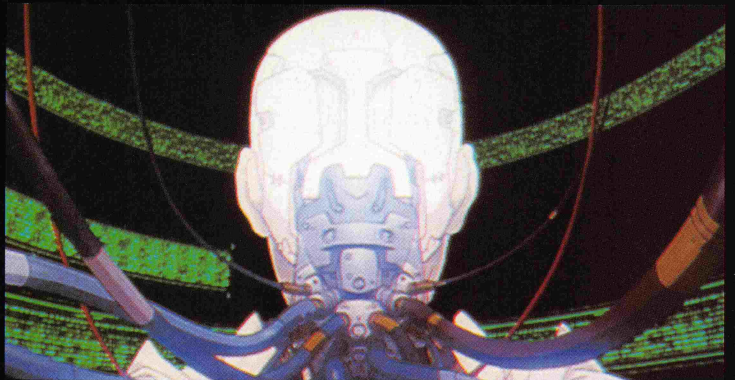
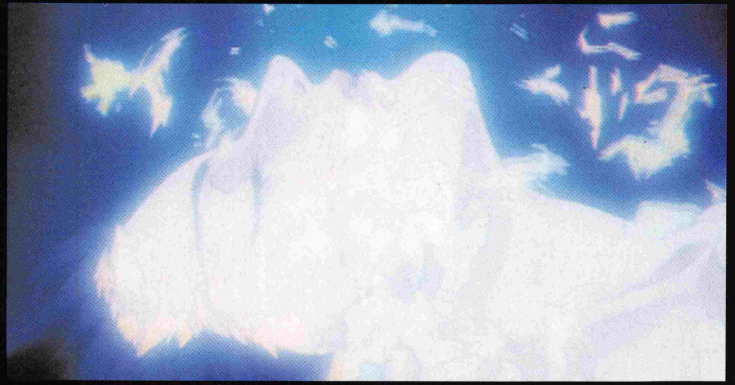
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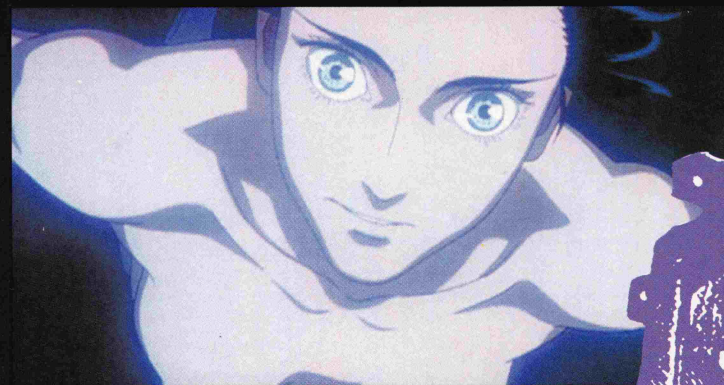
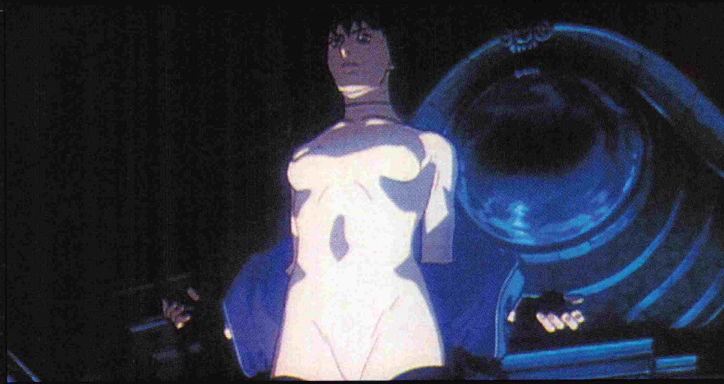
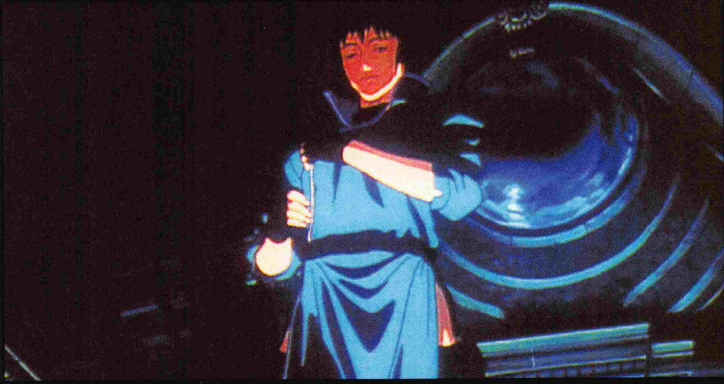
THE STORY

In the aftermath of the third and fourth World Wars, an Asian powerbloc led by Japan is the dominant world force, its position maintained by the elite Japanese security police, the SHELL task force. Most of the SHELL force have extensive cybernetic transplants; this gives them a unique edge when dealing with terrorists and dissidents but leaves their humanity in question.

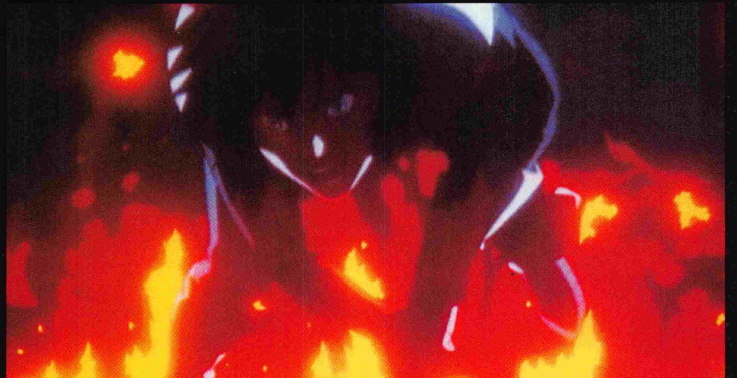
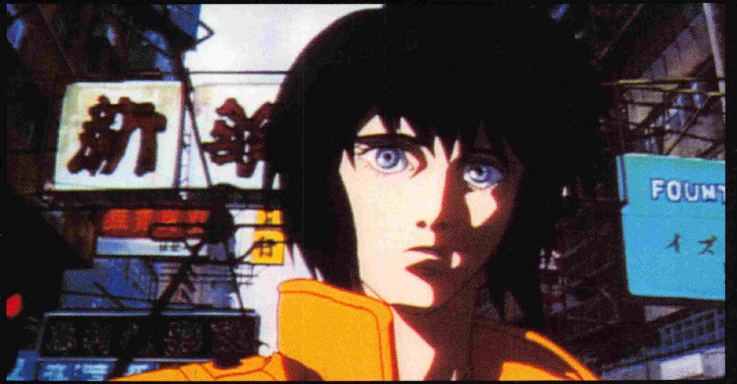
Cyborg Major Kusanagi of SHELL is investigating an assassination and suspect the notorious criminal computer genius known as the Puppet Master. She learns that there is more to the investigation than meets the eye; the criminal is working for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on a plan for a coup d'etat codenamed PROJECT 251. As the corrupt officials try to cover up their plots and SHELL continues its investigation, Kusanagi risks her identity and her very existence ...

GHOST IN THE SHELL is an intense and carefully-plotted work probing the potential uses and abuses of Artificial Intelligence and 'direct interfaces', questioning whether technological and medical advance is always 'progress'. The sceptical intelligence and deep humanism which Masamune Shirow brought to the original manga made it an outstanding work; the anime, with renowned director Mamoru Oshii (PATLABOR, URUSEI YATSURA and many more) heading a gifted team, promises to do it justice.



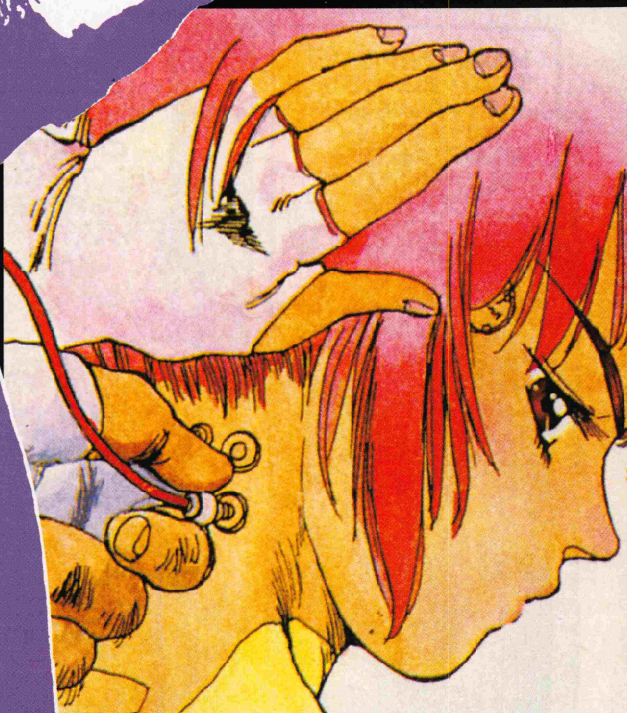
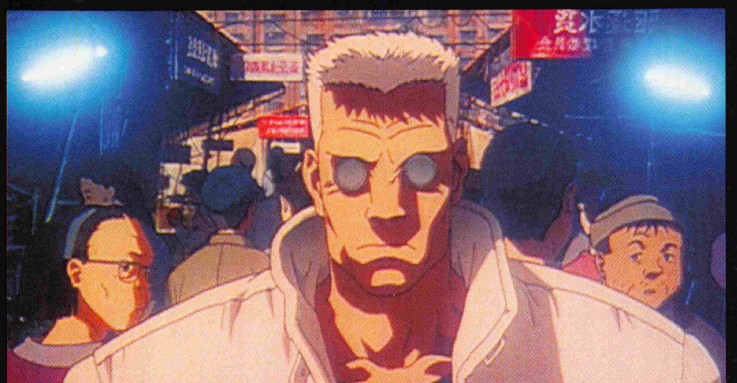
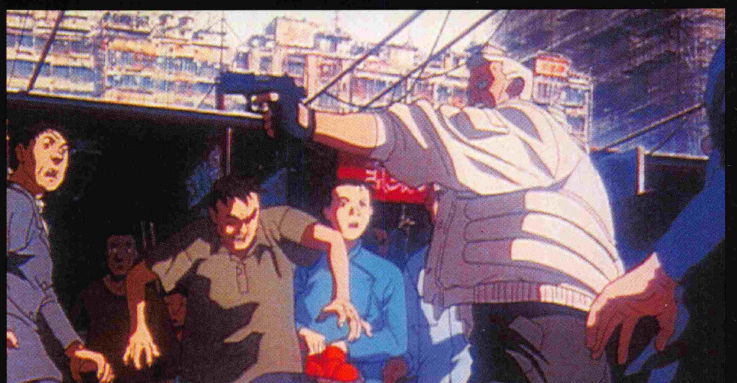
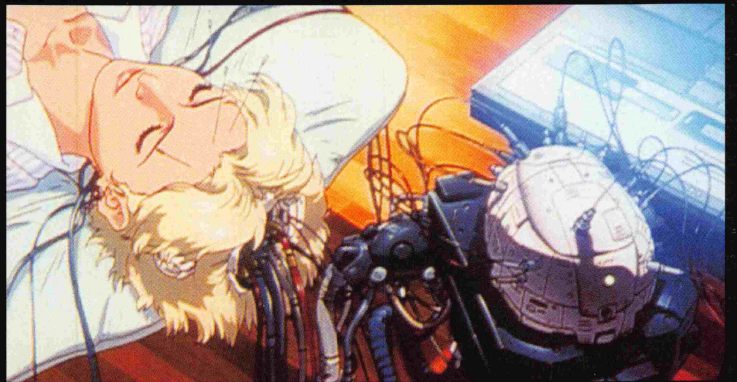


GHOST IN THE SHELL



GHOST IN THE SHELL: THE MANGA

First published in Japan in 1991 by Kodansha Limited, the English language version of GHOST IN THE SHELL is published by Dark Horse as an eight-issue mini-series, in a lively translation by Fred Schodt and Toren Smith which reflects Shirow's visceral action sequences just as well as his subtle and intelligent scripting. This is one of the best sf manga around, standing head and shoulders above most takes on the cyberfuture. If you aren't buying it already, you should be.





Osamu Tezuka, father of the modern anime and manga industry, produced a stream of innovative and highly influential films and TV series from the 1960s onwards. HELEN McCARTHY pays tribute to one of his best-loved movies.

Most artists have one particular theme to which they return again and again, which constantly intrigues them and challenges them to find new ways of exploring it and presenting it to the world. For the Renaissance sculptor Michaelangelo it was the male nude; for Mozart it was his relationship with his father; for the TV writer Lynda La Plante it's the criminal world; and for Osamu Tezuka it was the linked theories of karma and reincarnation. SPACE FIREBIRD is one of a series of stories in manga and anime form, linked by the motif of the phoenix, the immortal lifegiver, constantly reborn in flame; known generically as the HI NO TORI or PHOENIX cycle, they were described by Tezuka as 'my life's work'.

SPACE FIREBIRD was made in 1978; director Sugiyama had a number of stellar talents on his team, including Noboru Ishiguro, producer of the YAMATO TV series, creator of MEGAZONE 23 I & II, director on MACROSS and ORGUSS TV series and production supervisor on MACROSS DO YOU REMEMBER LOVE and the BUBBLEGUM CRASH! OAV series. With a budget of 800 million yen (about \$4 million at the time) it was the most expensive Japanese animated feature made to date. The technical quality of the animation was remarkable in its day, and its artistry is still impressive.

Imbued with childlike innocence, a sense of fun and a rare breadth of vision, it pays homage to Tezuka's childhood influences, with echoes of Disney's work and that of the Fleischer Brothers. PINOCCHIO is mentioned in the script as the inspiration of Olga's wish to become human, and there are strong overtones of FANTASIA, both in the use of imagery and in the way the music harmonises with and enhances the visuals. The score, a symphonic offering of considerable beauty and variety, is almost a character in itself, playing a very strong part in the film's overall effect. The breadth of the author's artistic awareness is exemplified in scenes referring to European graphic design, such as the strong Russian influences on the setpiece prison mining scenes. But SPACE FIREBIRD is more than a historical curiosity, a worthy piece pored over by film students; it's also a classic space opera, a landmark of SF animation and a hugely enjoyable film.

The world of the future is a bleak and terrifying place for everyone but the elite. Every individual is given a role before birth, brought up by robots to focus purely on fulfilling the requirements of the state;

education, employment, income, home and marriage are all decided on by officialdom, with little or no freedom of choice. Born into a dehumanising society where people are simply cogs in the machine, and even the wealthy must keep their assigned place, Godo has only one true friend - the robot girl Olga. She is sent to care for him when he is a small child and stays with him through his training for military service as a space pilot, even when he meets and falls in love with a girl of the elite class. When he is sent to prison for this terrible crime she comes to rescue him, and when he embarks on the search for the legendary Firebird, the only power in the universe that can regenerate the abused and exhausted Earth, she is with him. A host of comical, charming or menacing supporting characters take part in their adventures, several of them wellknown Tezuka stereotypes which his fans will recognise at once; but the relationship between Olga and Godo is the heart of the story.

Also ever-present is the shadow of man's destructive power, his determination to exploit every resource open to him without thought for the consequences. It isn't fanciful to see the shadow of Hiroshima over this fable, as it falls over the work of every artist of Tezuka's generation, no matter what the medium, but SPACE FIREBIRD condemns man's thoughtless exploitation of the earth in strong terms. The message is that we have to stop and think where our science and politics are leading us; when the planet's ecosystem crumbles under our assaults, blaming it all on our leaders won't change a thing. Don't think, though, that SPACE FIREBIRD is a bleak and worthy message-carrier; strong as its message it, it's enjoyably packaged. Olga's first transformation sequence is a perfect example of wordless communication, inventive and funny. The musical-comedy interludes with animated soft toy Pinchu and friends have a naive charm, and the various chases and the collapse of the prison mine are as tense and thrilling as anything filmed in live action.

This film has had a UK release before, in the early 80s on the now-defunct MOUNTAIN VIDEO label, but sank without trace. It had the same dub, provided by distributors Toho, and though not outstanding it's by no means the worst dub on the UK market. The Japanese credits have been removed but no cuts made; at the beginning the English language credits run on white screens and at the end a still-frame sunset has been left in place on the screen for several minutes while the beautiful closing music runs to its end. Classics like this are not often given the attention they deserve; let me urge you to redress the balance and give SPACE FIREBIRD a look.

Opposite page: Top :Godo faces the Phoenix
Bottom: Godo and Olga
This page: Below: Pinchu, Krak and Pooks
have a musical interlude.
Right hand column top to bottom: The fury
of the Phoenix.
A peaceful moment for Godo and Lena. The
Space Shark sets off on the Quest. Godo and
Dr. Salter at its controls

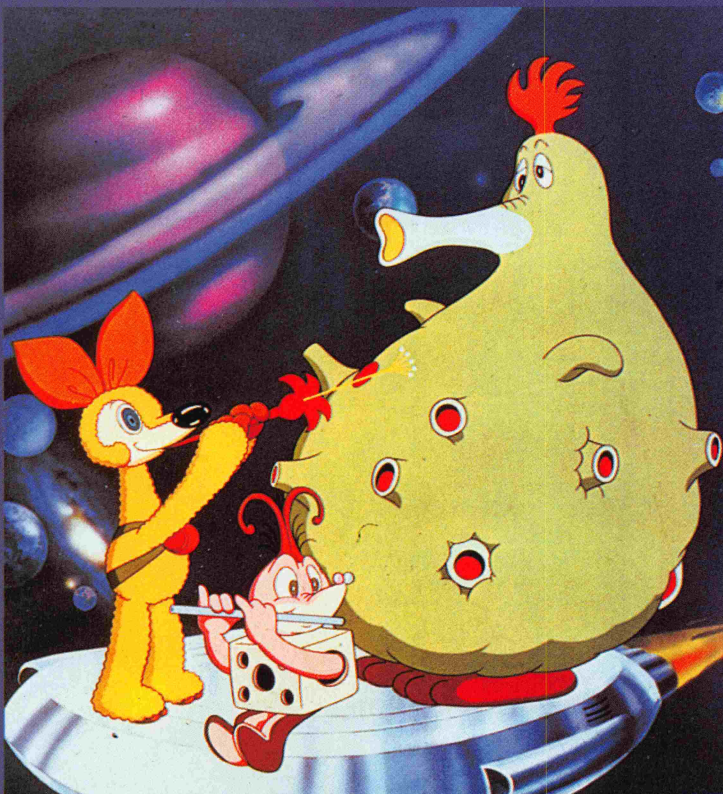
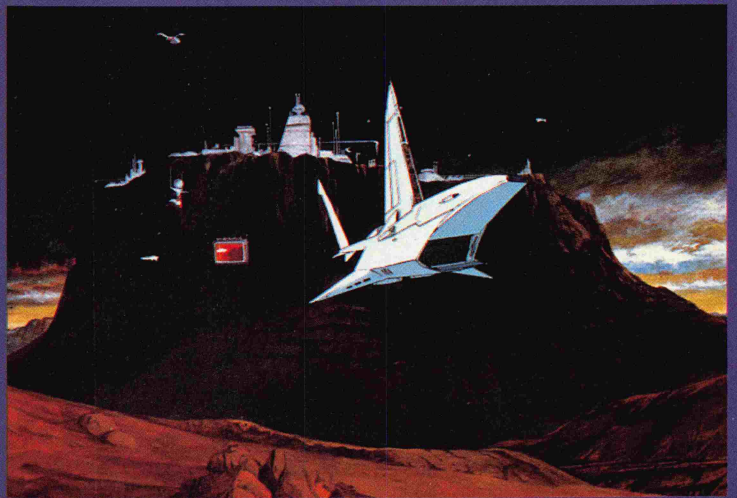
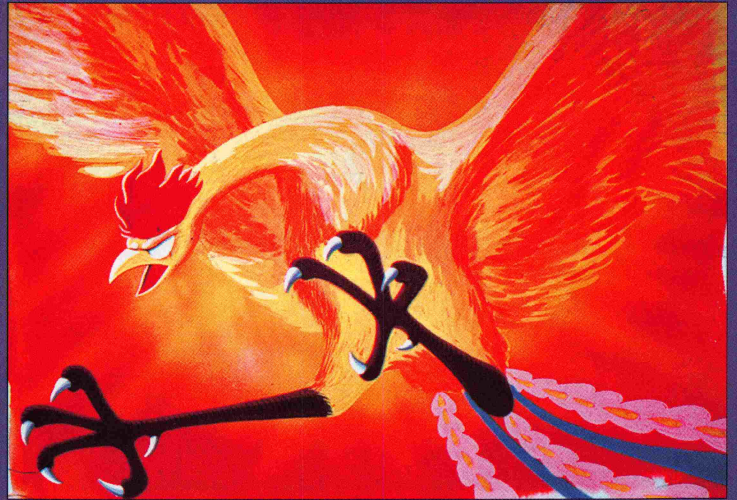
HI NO TORI 2772 : AI NO COSMOZONE
(PHOENIX 2772 : LOVE'S COSMOZONE)
90 mins approx. 1978 UK release as SPACE
FIREBIRD 1995 from Western Connection

CREW

DIRECTOR Taku Sugiyama
STORY Osamu Tezuka
SCREENPLAY Osamu Tezuka, Taku
Sugiyama
PRODUCERS Kiichi Ichikawa,
Susumu Asutagawa
ART DIRECTORS Kazuko Nakamura,
Noboru Ishiguro
MUSIC Yasuo Higuchi
PRODUCTION CO. Tezuka Production Co.

SPACE FIREBIRD

WOW X 2772



MAIN CHARACTERS

(NOT TO SCALE)

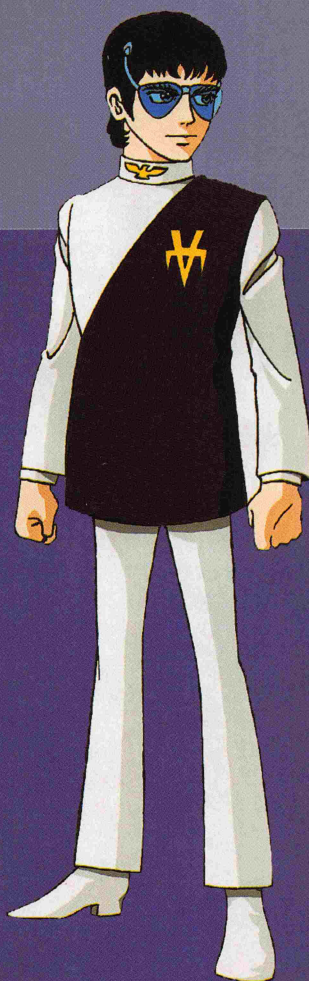
SPACE SHARK

The elegant ship in which Godo and his five friends set out to seek the Firebird is 181.5 metres long, 66.5 metres wide and 87.5 metres tall. It weighs 879 tonnes and has a payload of 78.4 tonnes.



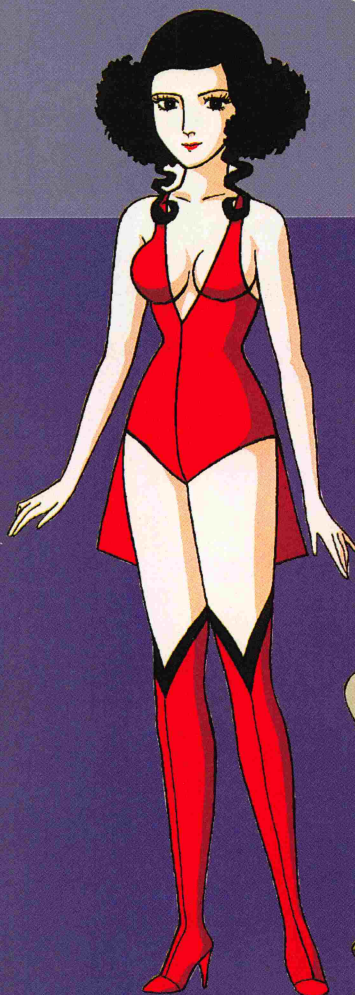
GODO

Age : Between 17 and 18 years old.
Height : 175 cm. Weight : 68 kg.
Godo is a naive but goodhearted young man, a brave and skilful pilot and a good shot, but he balks at senseless killing and has a deeply romantic side.



ROCK

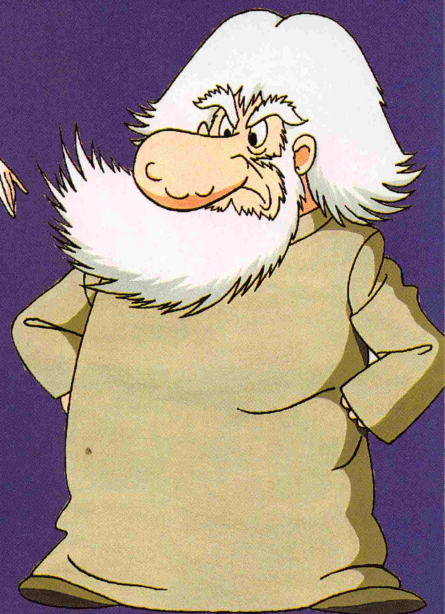
Age : The same as Godo - they are twin brothers. Height : 170 cm.
Weight : 63 kg. He is 'head of science' - though this seems to be as much a political position as a technical one - and is responsible for the project to drill into the earth's mantle to extract energy. He has ambitions to rise to the very top of the elite class, and his engagement to Lena is part of his plan to become Prime Minister one day. At first he sees Godo as a possible tool, and plans to use him to catch the Firebird for his own purposes; when Godo and Lena are caught together, he sends his brother to a prison camp. Not a nice man, very much the product of a heartless and immoral society.



LENA

(Japanese name could be read Remi or Leni)

Age : Ladies don't reveal this!
Height : 165 cm. Weight : 47 kg.
The beautiful daughter of Sir Eto, leader of the Council of Elders, she falls in love with Godo and meets him in secret, but is too afraid of losing all her privileges and becoming a social outcast to stand by him when their meetings are discovered. She marries his brother Rock, even though she loves Godo, and in the end proves to be treacherous and completely selfish. Pinchu is her pet, but leaves her to accompany Olga on the search for Godo.



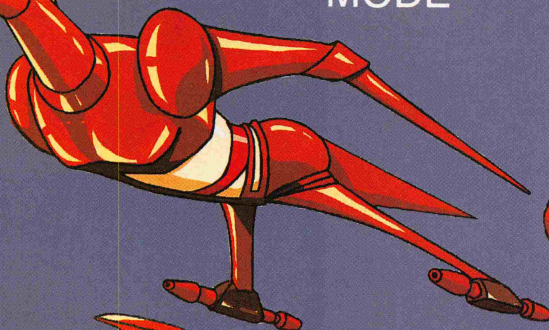
DOCTOR SALTER

Age : Between 60 and 65 years old.
Height : 155 cm. Weight : 65 kg. A crusty old scientist who befriends Godo in the prison camp in Iceland, Salter's gruff exterior hides a heart of gold. He enlists Godo's help to escape from the prison, and persuades him to search for the Firebird so that it can be studied for the benefit of mankind.

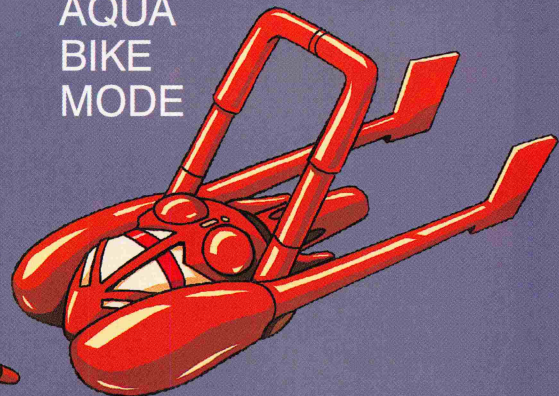
PASSENGER FLIGHT MODE



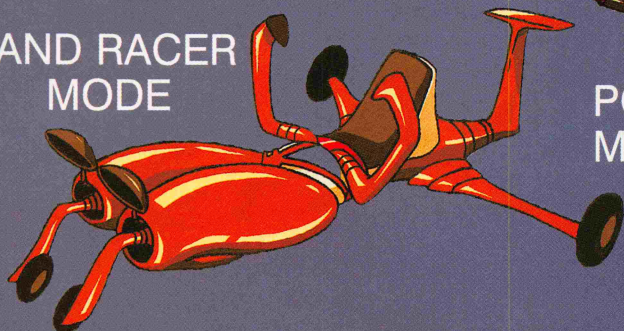
FLIGHT MODE



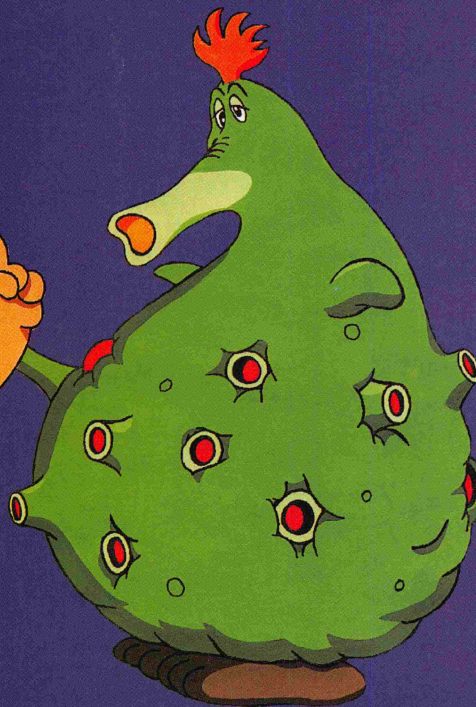
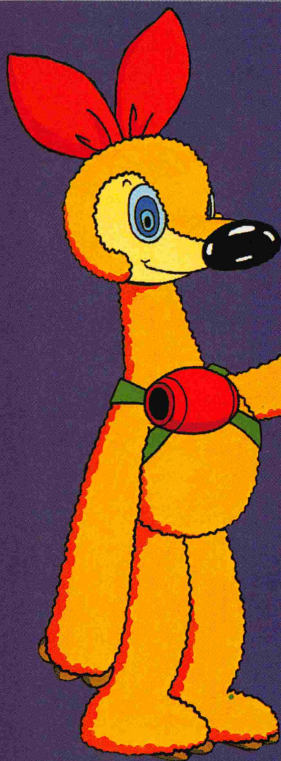
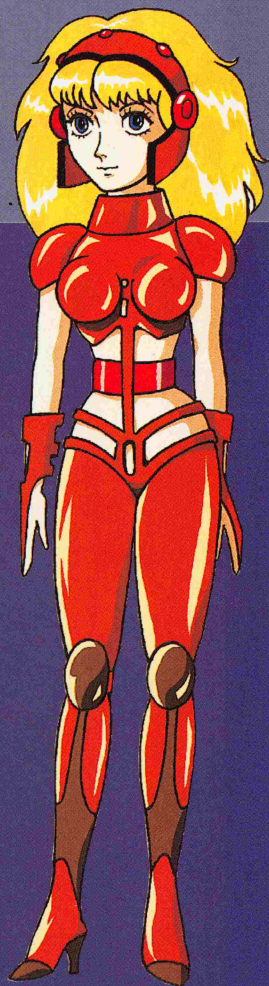
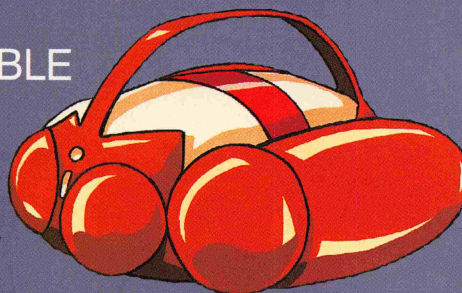
AQUA BIKE MODE



LAND RACER MODE



PORTABLE MODE



PINCHU

Age : unknown. height : 100 cm.
Weight : 26 kg. A cheerful creature with a passion for cleanliness, she looks like a cuddly toy and is never long separated from her dusting brush. She's a good musician, playing a flowertrumpet which she produces from nowhere to cheer up her friends when they are sad. She is living as Lena's pet when she meets Godo and Olga, but helps Olga find him in prison and joins them on their search for the Firebird.

KRAK

(Japanese name RAK KRAKK)
Age : unknown. Height : 85 cm.
Weight : 20 kg. An irritable and very vain little creature whose body is shaped like a dice, with holes for the spots through which it can pull its head and limbs in any arrangement. It insists the holes are pockets and can produce all kinds of strange things from inside the dice, and loves baths in caustic soda. The promise of soda baths is, in fact, what entices Krak to join the search for the Firebird on planet Tear.

POOKS

Age : unknown. Height : 200 cm.
Weight : 170 kg. Pooks is a good friend of Krak, a huge creature with a green body like the bag of a set of bagpipes, and numerous holes through which hornlike noises emerge, especially when it's frightened or startled, and which produce the most appalling snores when it's asleep. Despite its size it's rather timid. However it's essential to the success of the Firebird hunt because it knows where the Firebird roosts.

OLGA

Age : not relevant as she is a robot.
Height : 160 cm Weight : 50 kg.
She must be made of very light-weight materials, because on several occasions people run into her or hit her and are surprised to find her hard as metal. However she is a sweet, kindhearted individual, not simply because her programming makes her so, but, as she explains, because she watches and learns from humans and gradually begins to feel emotion. She can transform into a number of exotic forms - waterbike, light plane, hovercar and many more, including a portable mode with carrying handle.

ぼくらの海は
 こんなに輝いているんだ。



とび! 長編カラーアニメーション

とびのピーク

〈企画・製作〉日信商事株式会社 / 有アーバン・プロダクト / 草野啓二
 〈制作・配給元〉有アーバン・プロダクト ©くしら製作委員会1991

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 企画・プロデュース / 米川功真・五十嵐喜美子
 原作 / 原 秀人 原作協力 / 榎 雄一郎
 監督 / 森本晃司 脚本 / 信本敬子
 キャラクター・デザイン・作画監督 / うつのみやさとる
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 制作担当 / 大橋浩一郎

キャスト

佐々木典子・檀 心み・飯塚昭三・横沢啓子・他

配給協力 / 映画センター全国連絡会

green fields and huge open skies. Nine-year-old Kei lost his father, a fisherman (a tiny but powerful cameo by Norio Wakamoto), at sea several years ago, but keeps his bone flute to remember him by. The tiny village where his family lives used to be a whaling centre many years ago, but now the great whales rarely come inshore and other fish are the target of the fleet. One day, after a huge storm, Kei and his little brother Moito find an injured baby whale, pure white and very frightened, trapped in an inlet where the high waves must have flung him, unable to reach his anxious mother swimming just beyond the barrier of



Above: Kei and Mailla.
Top right top to bottom: An example of the stunning backgrounds in the film. / Kei, Mailla and her father. / Maillas Dolphins perform at the Sea Circus. / Fly Peek! Peek tries to leap the cities storm gate.



Satoshi Utsunomiya
ART DIRECTOR Yuji Ikehata
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Hideo Okazaki

CAST
KEI Noriko Sasaki
MOITO Kasuhisa Ikura
GRANDFATHER Fumio Matsuoka
FATHER Norio Wakamoto
MAILA Keiko Yokozawa

This film marks a new departure for Kiseki. The childrens' market isn't one into which they have previously ventured, but it's where FLY PEEK belongs, though its beautifully executed backgrounds, intriguing character designs and powerful voice acting mean that the adult anime fan will find much of interest there.

The character designs are particularly interesting. Much has been said of late in the Western anime press about the 'retro' trend evident in GIANT ROBO, KISHIN HEIDAN and other OAVs, but the influence of much earlier styles in chara design isn't limited to such shows. The characters in FLY PEEK hark back to the design trends of the 60s and early 70s, and their deliberate blockiness an exaggeration sets up an interesting contrast with the marvellously painted neo-realistic backgrounds, almost as if designer Satoru Utsunomiya were pointing out the dislocation of humans from their environment.

The story is set in Spain, offering ample opportunity for wonderful, almost Miyazaki-esque vistas of green fields and huge open skies. Nine-year-old Kei lost his father, a fisherman (a tiny but powerful cameo by Norio Wakamoto), at sea several years ago, but keeps his bone flute to remember him by. The tiny village where his family lives used to be a whaling centre many years ago, but now the great whales rarely come inshore and other fish are the target of the fleet. One day, after a huge storm, Kei and his little brother Moito find an injured baby whale, pure white and very frightened, trapped in an inlet where the high waves must have flung him, unable to reach his anxious mother swimming just beyond the barrier of

town's storm gates and into the open sea beyond, where his mother is still calling for him.

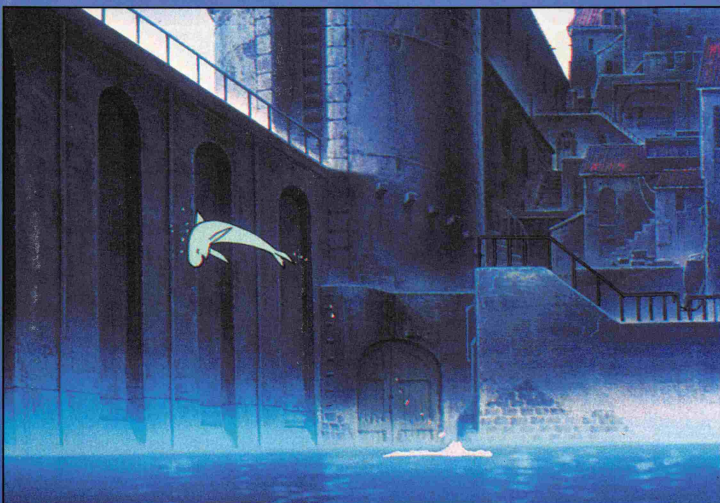
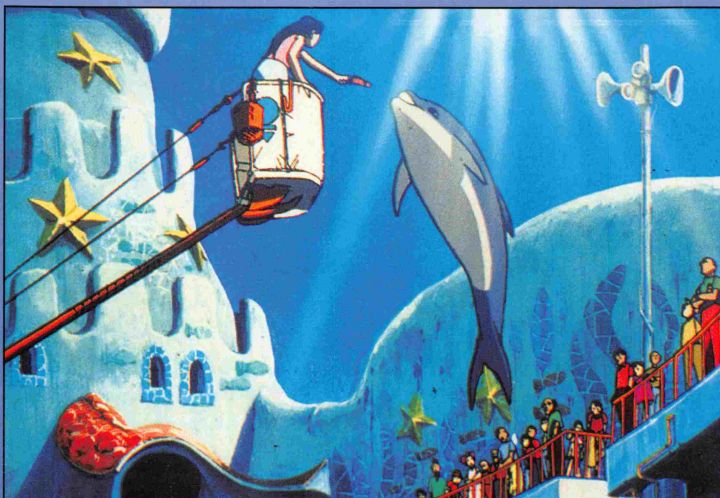
FLY PEEK! will appeal to a wide range of viewers. The decision to release it subtitled, normally a cause for fannish rejoicing, is perhaps regrettable because it will make it much less accessible to children. Excellent as the Japanese voice actors are, there is a powerful case here for a dubbed version. Meanwhile, the quality of the animation, direction, acting and storytelling make this a worthwhile purchase.

HELEN MCCARTHY

FLY PEEK



Above: Kei and Mailla.
Top right top to bottom: An example of the stunning backgrounds in the film. / Kei, Mailla and her father. / Maillas Dolphins perform at the Sea Circus. / Fly Peek! Peek tries to leap the cities storm gate.



神秘の世界

エルハザード

EL-HAZARD

The Magnificent World

by
PETER
EVANS
OF
SAKURA
STUDIO

SPECIAL THANKS TO Miss Mie Ide, the lovely new representative of Pioneer's animation division now that Mr. Yamada has moved to Hokkaido. Also to the Pioneer 'Doki-doki Waku-waki Panic Tour', the Ryo-oh-ki sitting on the computer, and to Hitoshi Doi, my tireless interpreter.

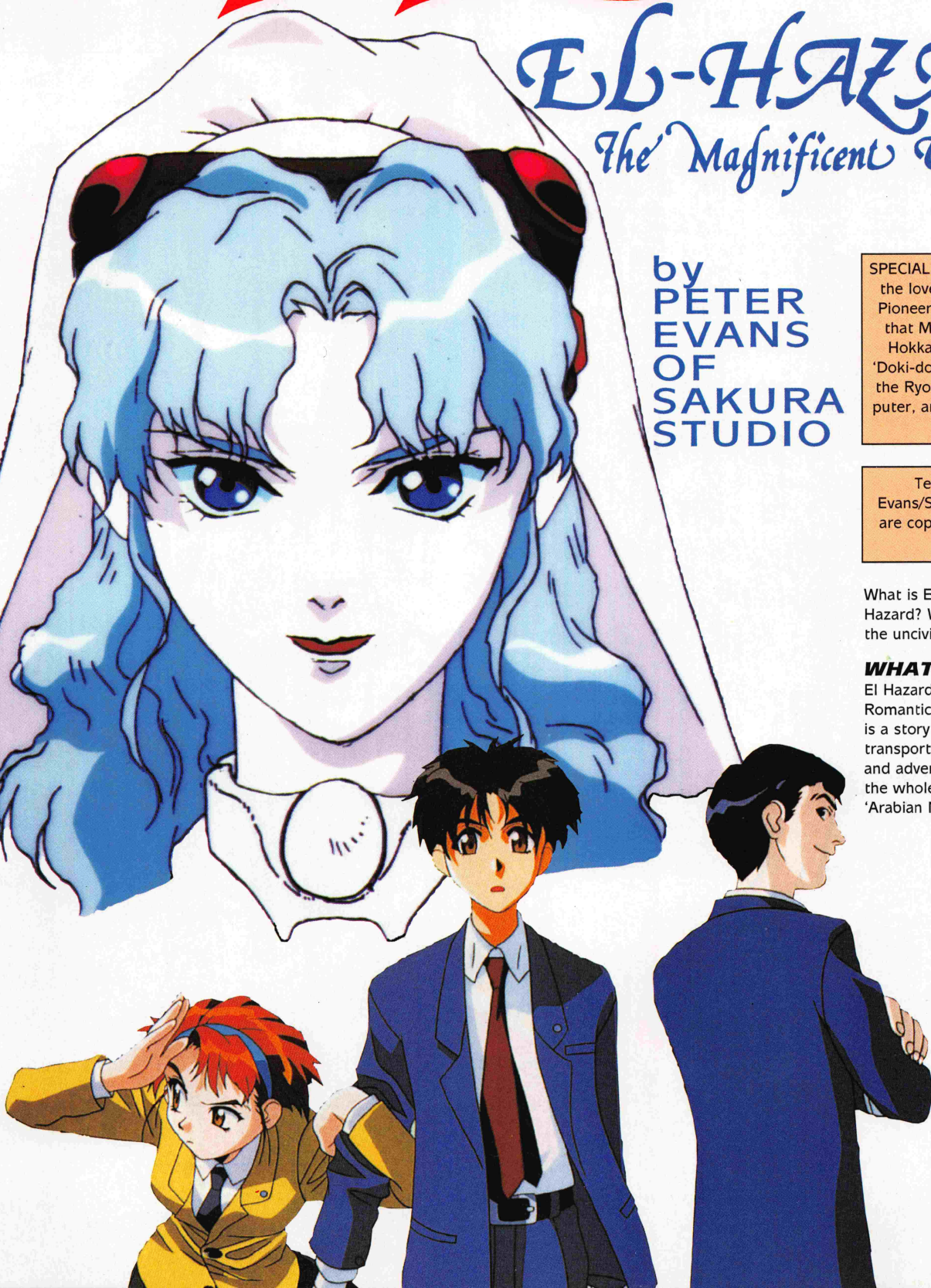
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What is El Hazard? Who is El Hazard? When will it be released in the uncivilised West?

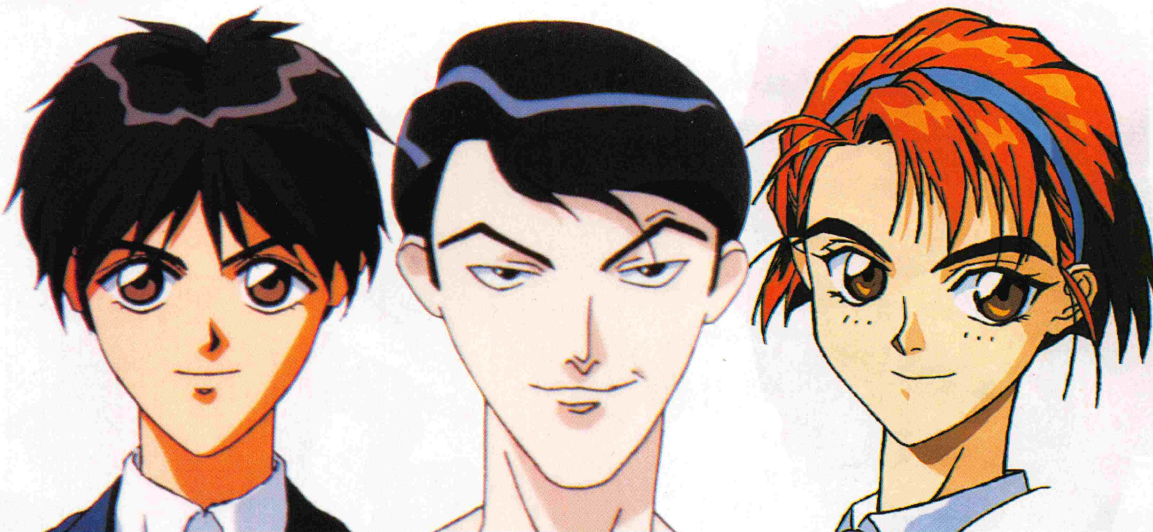
WHAT :

El Hazard is a 'Fantasy Adventure Romantic Action Movie'. Simple. It is a story about four people who are transported to a world of mystery and adventure. 'El' means 'city' and the whole anime has a mysterious 'Arabian Nights' feel to it.

Top left:
The mysterious Relic
Beauty, who whisks
Nanami, Makoto and Jinnai
(L to R) off to the world of
EL HAZARD







MAKOTO

JINNAI

NANAMI

STARRING : THE TERRESTRIAL TEAM

Makoto Mizuhara

(voiced by Tetsuya Iwanaga)

Makoto is a brilliant student. His grades are the best and he excels at anything he turns his mind to. He looks like a weakling, but will give his best when things are on the line. He speaks Osaka-ben (1 the Osaka dialect) and also looks like Fatara of Rostaria, who is missing.

Katsuhiko Jinnai

(voiced by Ryoutarou Okiayu)

President of the School Council at Shinonome High School. Egotistical and very proud of himself, he has declared that Makoto is his rival because he represents everything he is not. A mild-mannered megalomaniac, he decides to kill Makoto for the indignities the other boy has heaped upon him - just as long as he can do it without getting a hair out of place.

Masamichi Fujisawa Sensei

(voiced by Kouji Ishii)

Makoto's teacher at Shinonome High School. (Careful with the kanji - they can be read as either 'shinonome' or 'touun'.) Despite appearances to the contrary, he's a very serious teacher who is always thinking about his students, no matter how bad things become. He smokes like a volcano, and is a heavy drinker. His hobby is mountain climbing.

Nanami Jinnai

(voiced by Rio Natsuki)

Katsuhiko's younger sister, a lively girl ("Real Genki!") who likes Makoto, she is the opposite of her older brother and is always trying to throw a spanner in his evil schemes. She works hard at part-time jobs too - a paragon of virtue!

STARRING : THE EL HAZARD TEAM

Relic Beauty

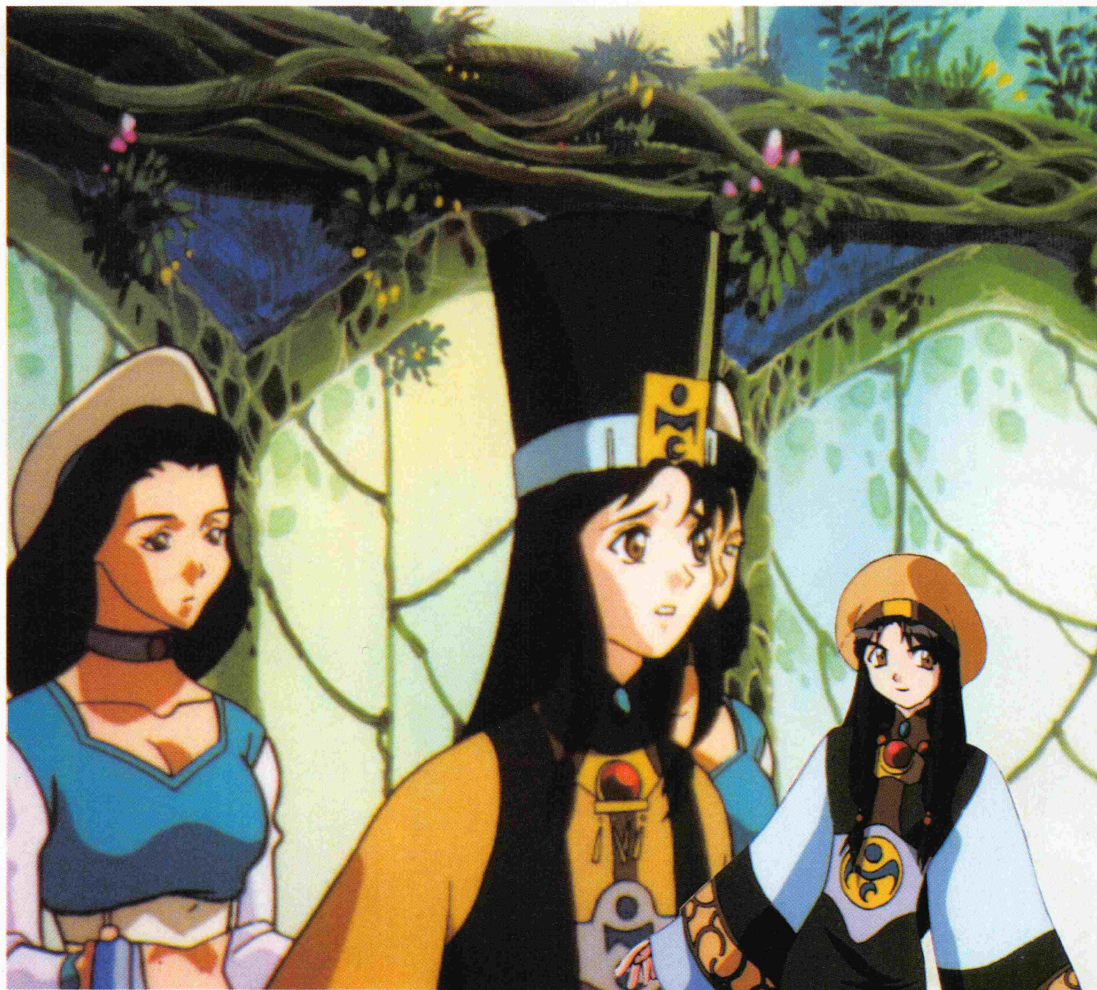
(voiced by Yuri Amano)

Her name is a secret! This beautiful blue-haired young woman has been sleeping in the ruins discovered in the basement of the High School, waiting for Makoto, for ten thousand years! Her power sends everyone in the school grounds to El Hazard.

Lune Venus

(voiced by Kikuko Inoue)

The Queen of Rostalia, one of the kingdoms of El Hazard. She is very serious and very beautiful. Her younger sister, Fatara, is missing, and she's worried about her. Royal politics are also getting very sticky at the moment; the allied kingdoms



Left: Fujisawa Sensei hits the bottle.
Right and above: Makoto or princess Fatara?

are worried about Bagrom (see below).

Ronz

The Queen's secretary, a big man who thinks only of his Queen and the safety of her kingdom.

Professor Strelbow

The Queen's adviser, an old and wise man.

Gareth

The Queen's intended. For some reason, neither of the Queen's aides like him.

Queen Diva

(voiced by Yoko Sawami)

The ruler of Bagrom, the insect kingdom. She has total control of her underlings; only the queen is humaniform. She thinks that Katsuhiko Jinnai was sent by god and trusts him to command her troops.

Bagrom

Insect-like creatures; they come in all shapes and sizes. All of them are controlled by Diva.

Alele (Etsuko Kozakura)

She loves pretty girls; because of this, she causes a lot of trouble. (Clue for TENCHIMUYO fans "Miya!")

THE THREE PRIESTESSES OF MALDUN MOUNTAIN

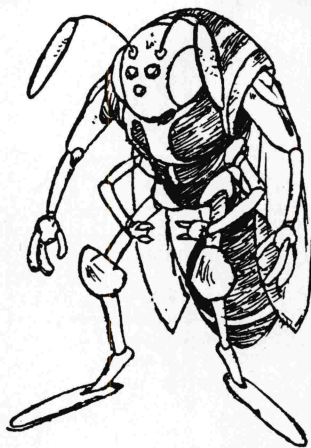
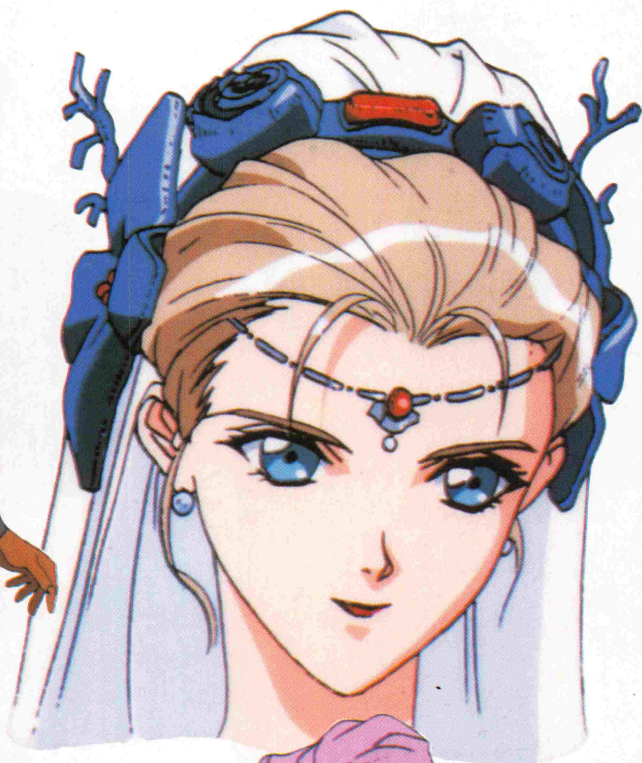
Shera-Shera is the youngest of the three priestesses of Maldunyama, and possesses the power of Fire. She first appears in episode 2 when Fujisawa sensei takes his reluctant team up the mountain. Voice actress Tomo Sakurai also played Milene in Macross 7 and Marin-Chan in Aka Zuk in Cha Cha.

Brown-haired **Aframann** is the earth priestess. She speaks Kyoto ben because her voice actress Miho Yoshida is from that city. The seiyun has played many TV roles, including the Japanese voice of lawyer Abby in L.A. Law.

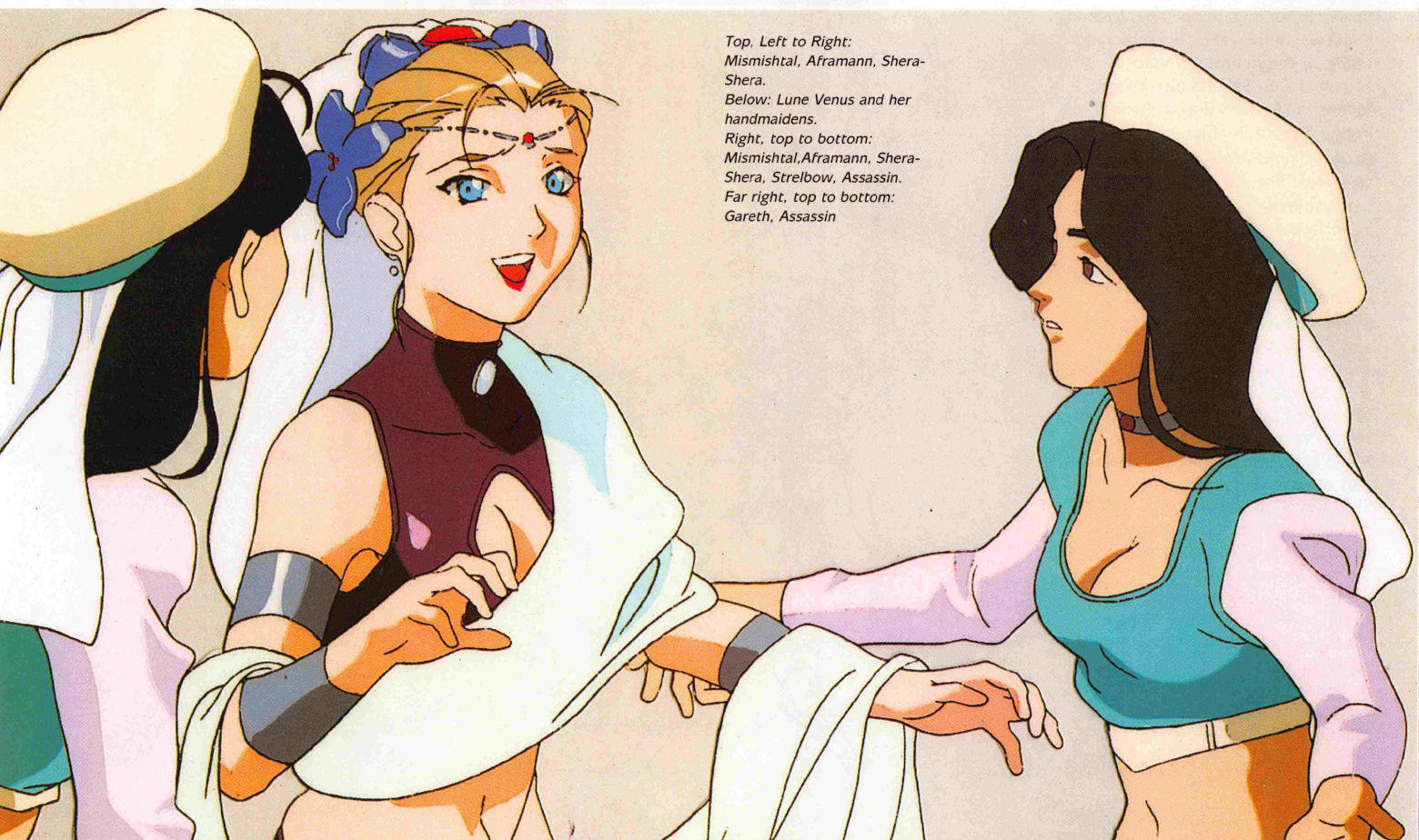
Mismishtai is the Water priestess and madly attracted to Fujisawa sensei. At 29 she's the oldest of the trio. Seiyuu Sayako Shimacu is a veteran of such roles as Shinobu in Urusei Yatsura and graced Ceo Akiko Natsume in Catgirl: Nuku-Nuku.

The Mysterious Assassin

She shows up in episode 2, aiming to kill Makoto (then in disguise as Fatora) with a crossbow, but Shera Shera's arrival interrupts her. She turns up again in episode 3 and casts a spell to help her devious schemes, but Nanami being an alien to El Hazard - can see right through it. Interestingly, her unknown employer obviously knows that Makoto isn't really Fatora! What secrets will be revealed in further episodes of El Hazard?



This page top left: Ronz
Top right: Lune Venus
Bottom Right: Queen Diva
Bottom Left: Two of her servants, the insect-like Bagrom



Top, Left to Right:
 Mismishtal, Aframann, Shera-Shera.
 Below: Lune Venus and her
 handmaidens.
 Right, top to bottom:
 Mismishtal, Aframann, Shera-Shera,
 Strelbow, Assassin.
 Far right, top to bottom:
 Gareth, Assassin

THE FIRST EPISODE - KONSEN NO SEKAI (World of Confusion)

After an earthquake, an ancient ruin whose designs are like nothing known to mankind is discovered in the basement of Shinonome High School. Fujisawa Sensei puts the basement off-limits and while getting some tape from his pocket to close off the stairs, drops a whiskey bottle and is labelled an alcoholic.

Down in the basement, student council president Jinnai claims that he discovered the ruins, as there are TV cameras present. His younger sister appears and exposes him as a fraud, asking if he really discovered the ruins and not Makoto-chan, oops, Second Year Class B Mizuhara. The rest of the student council turns against him; they want Makoto to become the next president but he has no interest in the job.

Jinnai, none too stable to start with, is driven over the edge when he sees the school notice board covered with anti-Jinnai posters. Remembering all the horrible things that Makoto has done to him - winning races, getting higher marks, being better than him in art class, taking the last sandwich at lunchtime - he declares that he will not rest until his rival has been removed, and laughs himself sick. The he lures Makoto to a meeting with a love letter stolen from his sister Nanami (who has also written the same letter to the president of the SF Club, the Tennis Club, etc etc), pulls a rope from his pocket with which to strangle his rival, and gives chase.

Fujisawa Sensei is busy cleaning his pitons, smoking and guzzling sake when the doorbell rings. Nanami Jinnai has brought him bento (Japanese for lunchbox) and tea. He thinks this is very kind of her until she tells him how much it costs. She is a Baito-san, (from the German 'Arbeit' a loan-word in Japanese, meaning a part-time worker) meaning she has a part-time job selling lunches.

Jinnai finally corners Makoto, pausing to comb his hair, and is about to strangle him when something strange happens! There is a flash of light and everything stops for Makoto. At first he is worried about Jinnai, who seems to be stuck in mid-step - even hitting him on the head with a plank has no effect! Makoto wanders off, following a strange sound.

In the basement, the relic is alive, beams of light shining from the floor, As Makoto crosses the hexagonal room, the lights wrap around him and the ceiling lights up; the odd statue in the wall opens, reveal-

ing a beautiful woman! She is overjoyed at seeing Makoto, she has been waiting for him for 10,000 years! She wants to tell him so much about El Hazard, but there is no time to talk. Stepping back, she starts the magic; her final words to him are "Please be nice to me when you meet me..."

As is traditional with all the best magics, the school explodes. All the people on the premises are transported to El Hazard.

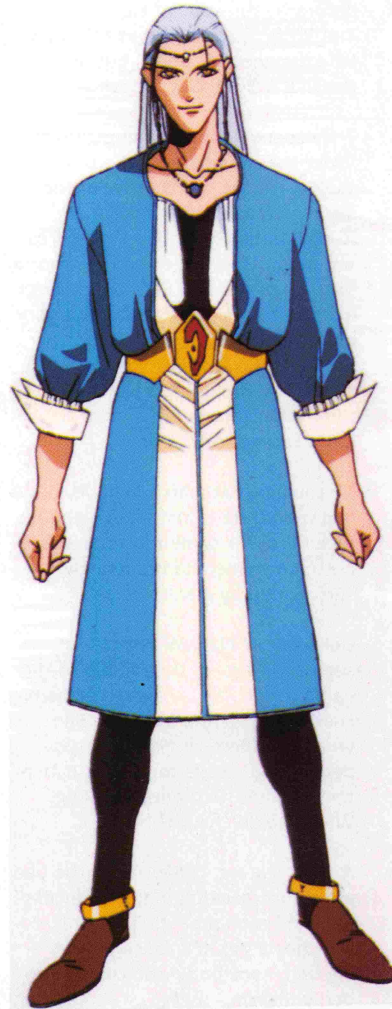
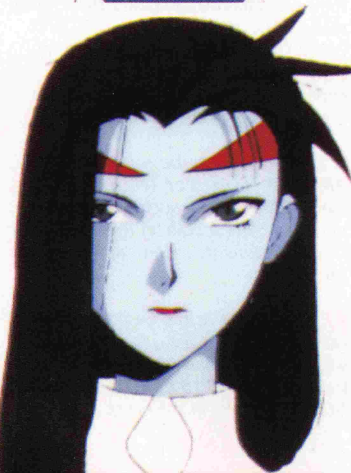
Makoto wakes up in a huge and airy forest. He hears a rustle and swearing, and Fujisawa Sensei, bento and cup still in hand, staggers out of the undergrowth. He thinks it very interesting but says perhaps they should go back to school Maokot asks how, because this place doesn't look like Earth. 'This isn't SF, you know,' the teacher declares, 'we'll just ask someone the way.' He finishes the bento then lights a cigarette and discovers that tragically, his sake bottle is empty!

A scream rouses him from his frantic self-pity, and a beautiful woman almost runs into them, tripping and falling on the grass. Fujisawa Sensei turns crimson at this vision of loveliness and tells Makoto not to look, he's too young. But Makoto is looking at the horde of giant insects charging them. Before they can move, half a dozen insects attack.

With amazing powers, and a touch of "Drunken Fist", Fujisawa Sensei disperses all comers. Somehow, coming to El Hazard has made him a superhero! The same is not true of Makoto, but Fujisawa Sensei rescues him from three insects with a mighty leap and a top secret Coolmove(TM). (He has been watching too much 8- MAN.) Then something draws the insects away.

The woman's maids are tending to her and her chief aide, Ronz, thanks the rescuers for saving the Queen from Bagrom. He is surprised to see Makoto. The woman recovers and notices him too; she calls him Fatara and runs to him, asking where he has been. Makoto tries to explain she must be mistaken, he is not Fatara, and Fujisawa Sensei asks if they know the way to Shinonome High School, Shinonome, or even Japan. They don't, but say that perhaps the wise man Strelbow does.

Boarding the Royal yacht, they leave the ground and head for the city. It is a beautiful place with many towers and minarets, much like the cities in the tales of 1,001 Arabian Nights. The most glorious building is the palace. Ronz leaves the two guests in one of its huge balcony gardens while he goes to fetch the Vizier Strelbow. Fujisawa Sensei says that they need to get home



before he runs out of cigarettes. The Vizier is amazed that they may be from another world, but he doesn't know the way back.

They spend so long talking with the Vizier that it is dark by the time they go to see the Queen. In the sky high above the kingdom of Rostalia, the 'eye of God' obscures the moon. The Queen shows them a portrait of her and Fatara, and asks Makoto to pose as Fatara for a very important meeting tomorrow. Fatara is the Queen's younger sister. Makoto objects violently to this. Sister means girl! and he is quite categorically a boy!

Meanwhile, Katsuhiko Jinnai is in a bad mood. He is lost, alone, and his face hurts for some reason. He is not happy when he is suddenly surrounded by giant insects!

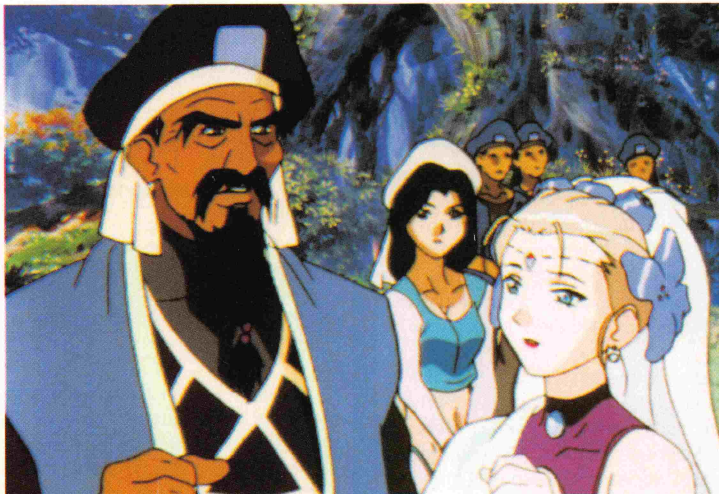
But what of Nanami-chan? Last seen ages ago. In the middle of the harsh desert, an exhausted Nanami-chan staggers into an oasis. She wonders where she is, what happened, and where to go that is better? She has no money, nothing! What should she do?

A tired 'Fatara' collapses on the bed after an exhausting day of princessing. He keeps repeating that he is a boy, not a girl. If this isn't bad enough, somebody else climbs into bed with him - a girl ...

TO BE CONTINUED ...

2. BIJO NO SEKAI (World of Beautiful Women)
3. ONSHEN NO SEKAI (World of Hot Springs)
4. KISHIN NO SEKAI (Devil God's World)
5. RAIMEI NO SEKAI (Thunder World)
6. SENKOU NO SEKAI (Sparkling World)
7. EIEN NO SEKAI (Eternal World)

Below: Alele



INTERVIEW: RYOEI TSUKIMURA

One of the guests whom Pioneer LDCA brought along to ANIME EXPO was TENCHIMUYO! writer and EL HAZARD creator RYOEI TSUKIMURA. His anime work has included cowriting stints on the classic TETSUJIN #28, cookery series MISTER AJIKKO, action-adventure series METAL JACK, films like ZINGI and OAVs including CATGIRL NUKU-NUKU, MOLDIV-ER, BLUE SEED and AOZORA SHOJOTAI. He's also worked on CD drama scripts for titles like TENCHI and NG KNIGHT LAMUNE & 40. In a fascinating interview he talked to Helen McCarthy of AFX and Chris Keller of V-MAX about the writer's art in an anime context.

Q What aims did you have in mind when you started writing TENCHI for TV, after the success of the OAVs and CDs?

RT : When we started, there were three concepts I really wanted to emphasise. The first was the setting for the action. If someone's a big anime fan and has seen the OAVs, it's easy for that person to understand very complex settings and scenarios, but we wanted to make TENCHI on TV catch the attention of the regular viewers, as well as the otaku. Then, I wanted the mood of the stories to be colourful, cheery, very attention-getting - you might call it slapstick, in terms of comedy. Finally, I wanted to use the opportunity of a regular TV slot to bring out the full potential of the characters, to show off their personalities and how human-like they really are. It's only a 26-episode TV series; I was able to write the whole story and still leave a little mystery for the later episodes, so that you will have a better understanding of it all if you watch the whole thing. The other great thing for me, was that since the video series which had already appeared was written by Kageshimasan, I could show my appreciation of both series as a writer, and connect the two.

Q Could you explain to us what a writer in anime does?

RT : Well, everything changes on a case by case basis! On TENCHI, for instance, the concepts and characters were other people's work, but I wanted to create my own stories using those characters, just like the writer on BATMAN 3. Since I created SHINKI NO SEKAI EL HAZARD, those characters, that story and that setting are all my own work - I created that world from scratch! I named characters, set their personalities, decided the English title EL HAZARD THE MAGNIFICENT WORLD. I really enjoyed creating my own world. It's been a wonderful experience for me; as a writer there are not many chances to do this!

Q : There seem to be echoes of THE ARABIAN NIGHTS or THE THIEF OF BAGHDAD did any such works influence you? For instance, the episode titles, first night, second night and so on...

RT : Yes, right at the beginning when I talked to Mr. Hayashi, the director, I wanted an Arabian-type world as a basis and hoped to have a taste of Arabian fantasy in the work.

Q: And names like *Queen Diva* and *Bagrom* seem to show familiarity with the *Martian novels* of *Edgar Rice Burroughs*?

RT: Oh yes, Mr. Hayashi likes Burroughs' works and wanted to include some elements of that feeling; so I kept it in mind while I created my own world.

Q: Having come from writing for live action TV & film to writing for anime, what did you have to learn & keep in mind?

RT: I watched many, many great movies which I wanted to emulate, and looked closely at comedies from the 40s and earlier eras, which are all linked. There's a certain attitude, you might call it a sort of screwball comedy or sophisticated comedy, and there's also a feeling of fantasy, of lots of new possibilities like outer space, monsters, new things. Coming into anime there's a big difference - regular actors can't show certain things, but in anime you can create any moods or characters.

Q: So a writer has more freedom working for anime?

RT: Yes! As a writer in Japanese movies and TV you have no freedom.

Q: Was it very difficult to go from writing the hard-edged, male-oriented, action-packed situations of something like *METAL JACK* to writing for a largely female cast in very different settings in *TENCHI*?

RT: When I was doing *METAL JACK* they used to call me 'Hard Boiled Tsukimura' after the Bruce Willis movie. Now they call me 'Bishojo (beautiful girl) comedy Tsukimura' - which is exactly what I like! But I must admit that I put the same amount of effort into whichever kind of show I

am doing, and I think both can show off all the different aspects of comedy and relationships, both male and female. On *TENCHI*, at first I thought maybe there might be too many girls and wanted to bring in more guy characters - but I didn't think that would be a smart move for the fans! Yes, it's an all-girls kind of show, but the anime isn't just good because of the cute girls - it's because it manages to portray the characters and their lifestyle in a humorous way. Take Princess Aeka for instance - she is always very much the 'Jurai Princess' and without that she would not be herself. She doesn't notice because her life revolves around this fact; she's a very responsible person, yet she doesn't notice that her whole life is centred on being a Princess. Will she change after meeting Tenchi, and why? That was one of the themes I had to develop. Then there's Ryoko - in the TV series she's a space pirate and lives freely, but Tenchi brings out a part of herself that she never understood, so that's the main theme for her. Tenchi is changed by meeting both girls, and just at that point he is the main thing in their lives; so they fight each other for him, but in a way they enjoy it, they have fun arguing, because (the arguing) is just a short-term event in their lives.

Q: You obviously think very deeply about your characters. Do you have any choice in the casting of the voice actors?

RT: On *EL HAZARD* I was at the audition and participated in the choice; on *TENCHI* I had a say in casting the new characters. On *EL HAZARD*, Makoto is both a boy and a princess - we had to find a very special quality in an actor's voice, so that the seiyuu could do both roles. Then it took half a year to find the perfect bishojo voice for the mysterious beauty in the first Night - in episode one.

Q: Do you work closely with the seiyuu on recording, or leave that to the director?

RT: I do it! The director, the sound director and I are at the recording and I work with the seiyuu to get the characters right.

Q: On *AOZORA SHOJOTAI*, the characters are quite a bit older than those in *TENCHI*, and they have all had difficulties or failures in their lives. Did this make them more difficult to write?

RT: *AOZORA SHOJOTAI* is more realistic than *TENCHI* but the process of digging into the characters, finding out their ambitions and personalities, is just the same thing. Many of the voice actors were the same and used their experience from one role in the other. Mitaka had a really bad past, but when she began to understand herself her pain eased. Ryoko is the same type of character, though Mitaka is more human; I wrote them both at the same time, and the same voice actress plays both roles.

Q: On *BLUE SEED*, how did your humorous approach work on *Takadasan's myths and mysticism*? And did you get the story, as it were, complete and intact, or did you add anything to it?

RT: I was involved in the story development. Of course we already had the main story; my fight was to bring out the characters in this type of genre as well.

Q: Are you used to working with mythology and mystery? Do you read this kind of material?

RT: Well, the mythological part of *BLUE SEED* was already mainly worked out by the director and producer, it was their choice. But if the

setting or background is too big and confusing, it distorts the basic story and makes it difficult for me to explain what's going on and plan the story so that viewers can follow it. If I make one mistake it can ruin the story, or the 'image', so I have to try and bring in such things smoothly.

Q: *CATGIRL: NUKU-NUKU* is very popular in the UK. How did you develop NukuNuku from being a creation, an artificial thing, to being a person, as she is by the end of the series?

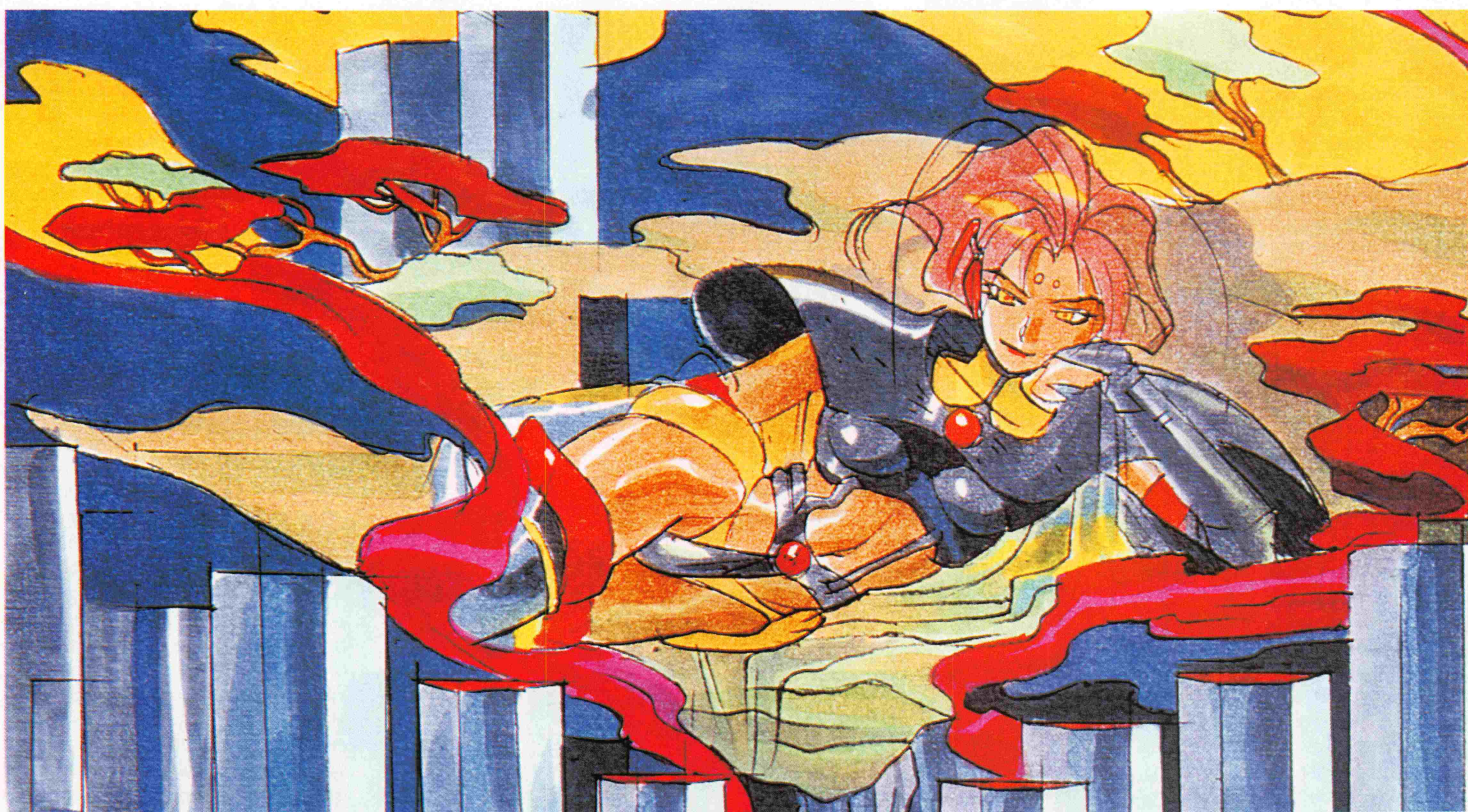
RT: On that show, I was working on the radio dramas while the manga was running. Both were strongly influenced by the fans and certain things in there could not have been animated, so I just filled in the details to make the animation work.

Q: Nuku-Nuku herself is almost a *Frankenstein-monster* character, she's so innocent. And Akiko-sama seems to show the problems of women who have work and a family, and the choices they might face.

RT: Akiko-sama is very interesting. She influenced *EL HAZARD's* Mismishtal. In *EL HAZARD* I wanted to use Akiko, to change her around into a new character but to keep the same type of personality, so she is the spin-off, or maybe the remains, of Akiko!

At this point the convention staff had to interrupt and tell us our time with Tsukimura-san was up, so we thanked him for a very enjoyable interview.

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Even before Harmony Gold's **ROBOTECH** and its ill-fated sequel, the depth, characterisation, and accessibility of **MACROSS** had assured it a place in anime history. One need only recall the amount of security placed around the Japanese arm of the Sentinels project to realise just how highly the show was regarded, years after it had disappeared from the airwaves. While **ROBOTECH** was an essentially different entity from **MACROSS** itself, there were still enough similarities to make a connection inevitable, should rumours of a sequel be leaked. To avoid the furore this would cause among **MACROSS** fans, **ROBOTECH** character names had to be disguised, while the visual designs of the cast were altered to lessen their similarity to the originals. It became clear to everybody involved that the fan communities in both Japan and the United States were still hungry for anything **MACROSS**-flavoured.

When financial and creative problems caused the Sentinels project to fold in 1986, the field was left open for a true sequel. Of course, any decision in this direction would be the result of avarice rather than altruism - a name that can sell merchandise is a valuable commodity in the anime market, and there can be no denying that the **MACROSS** name could sell with the best of them. Given these facts, it is in some ways surprising that six years would pass before the release of a true sequel.

In 1990 - perhaps as a way of testing the commercial waters - Japanese TV repeated the entire **SUPER DIMENSION FORTRESS MACROSS** series, then released all thirty-five episodes on laserdisc as a commemorative boxed set. With the market clearly defined by the resulting sales and viewing figures, the way was clear for the next phase of the **Macross** phenomenon.

MACROSS 2: LOVERS AGAIN was released in 1992, ten years after the original series first graced Japanese TV. Produced by Hero Communications, Big West, and the newly-formed **Macross II Project**, the show was released as a six-part OAV and was set eighty years after the events described in **MACROSS: AI OBOETE IMASUKA**. During the intervening eight decades, the Earth's population of **Zentrans** and **Meltrons** (male and female **Zentradi**, respectively) have become both assimilated by and fiercely loyal to their adopted home. In contrast, rogue **Zentran** factions from beyond the solar sys-

超時空要塞 MACROSS



SHOCKWAVE

by PETER J EVANS

tem continue to make sporadic attacks, leading an assault against Earth every ten years or so. The **UN Spacy** have become so adept at repulsing these attacks - using a combination of improved mecha and the power of Lynn Minmay's songs from the first war - that an element of complacency, even overconfidence, has crept into the command structure. When an alien fleet appears just outside Mars orbit in 2089, it is believed to be another splinter faction out to make trouble, and of no serious threat.

However, continued observation reveals that this fleet is not only much larger than previous raiding forces, but also shows some considerable differences in design. Far from being a rogue **Zentran** element, the invading force are a contingent of the Imperial **Marduk** fleet, under direct control of Lord Emperor **Ingues**.

The **Marduk** (in a coincidental parallel with **Carl Macek's Robotech Masters**) are the controllers of the **Zentran** race: humanoid in form and size, they use their giant clone-soldiers to achieve a goal of peace through annihilation. In an attempt to impose absolute order throughout the universe, they exercise a program of systematic enslavement and destruction of other intelligent races. **Ingues** himself, a god-like 'divinity' of immense power and longevity, embodies this goal, and he has turned the **Marduk** race into a vast, fanatical army in order to achieve it.

It soon becomes clear that the **UN Spacy** is hopelessly outclassed by the **Marduk** fleet. Not only are the aliens better equipped and trained than before, but they have their own counter to the 'Minmay Attack'. Enthroned within their massive warships are female 'Emulators', whose eerie siren-song both inspires and controls the attacking aliens. It is **Ishtar**, a highly-skilled **Emulator**, who becomes the focus for events, when she is kidnapped from her ship by a young and reckless news reporter by the name of **Hibiki Kanzaki**.

Ambitious, headstrong, and somewhat obnoxious to begin with, **Hibiki** is taken under the wing of veteran reporter **Dennis Lone** for his first foray into the dangerous world of the war correspondent. **Lone** is killed in the fighting, an event which affects **Hibiki** deeply: determined to air the truth about the approaching war fleet to the viewing masses, he 'rescues' **Ishtar** and brings her to

VALKYRIE

Earth. As the girl begins to assimilate Earth culture and question her own loyalty to the Marduk cause (after seeing the remains of the SDF Macross, a powerful figure from her mythology), the aliens launch an all-out assault in order to get her back. The story progresses to an inevitable climax, with the ancient space fortress re-activated to battle the Marduk, and the power of song once again saving the day.

In addition to being released as six half-hour OAVs, *MACROSS 2: LOVERS AGAIN* was also published as a manga drawn by Tsuguo Okazaki. US Renditions handled distribution of the OAVs in America, employing the services of LA Hero to re-dub the script into English. In 1993, Viz Communications released the *Macross 2* manga as a ten-part series in the West, while Palladium Books released the first in a series of role-playing books based on the show in July of the same year.

In 1994, Kiseki Films released *MACROSS 2* in the UK, as three tapes containing two episodes each. Kiseki (whose name is Japanese for 'miracle') went on to market both *MACROSS: CLASH OF THE BIONOIDS* (a dub of *AI OBOETE IMASUKA*) and *ROBOTECH: THE MACROSS SAGA*. Later in the year, Viz Communications followed their publication of the *MACROSS 2* manga with *The Micron Conspiracy*, an original five-part comic, drawn and produced entirely in the USA but leaning heavily towards Okazaki's style. Written by James Hudnall and drawn by Schulhoff Tam, the story follows the adventures of Hibiki Kanzaki and mecha pilot Silvie Gena as they become involved in terrorism and political backstabbing a year after the events described in the original manga.

MACROSS 2 relies heavily on its predecessor for support, and there are a considerable number of parallels between the two series. The central emotional triangle between the young male lead, innocent songstress, and efficient female lead is re-created with Hibiki, Ishtar, and Silvie Gena taking the places of Hikaru Ichijo, Lynn Minmay, and Misa Hayase. Although Hibiki is a news reporter rather than an aspiring pilot, the 'antipathy curve' between him and Silvie follows closely that of Hikaru and Misa, with initial dislike becoming mutual respect and affection (of course, Hikaru and Misa ended up as lovers, but they had longer).

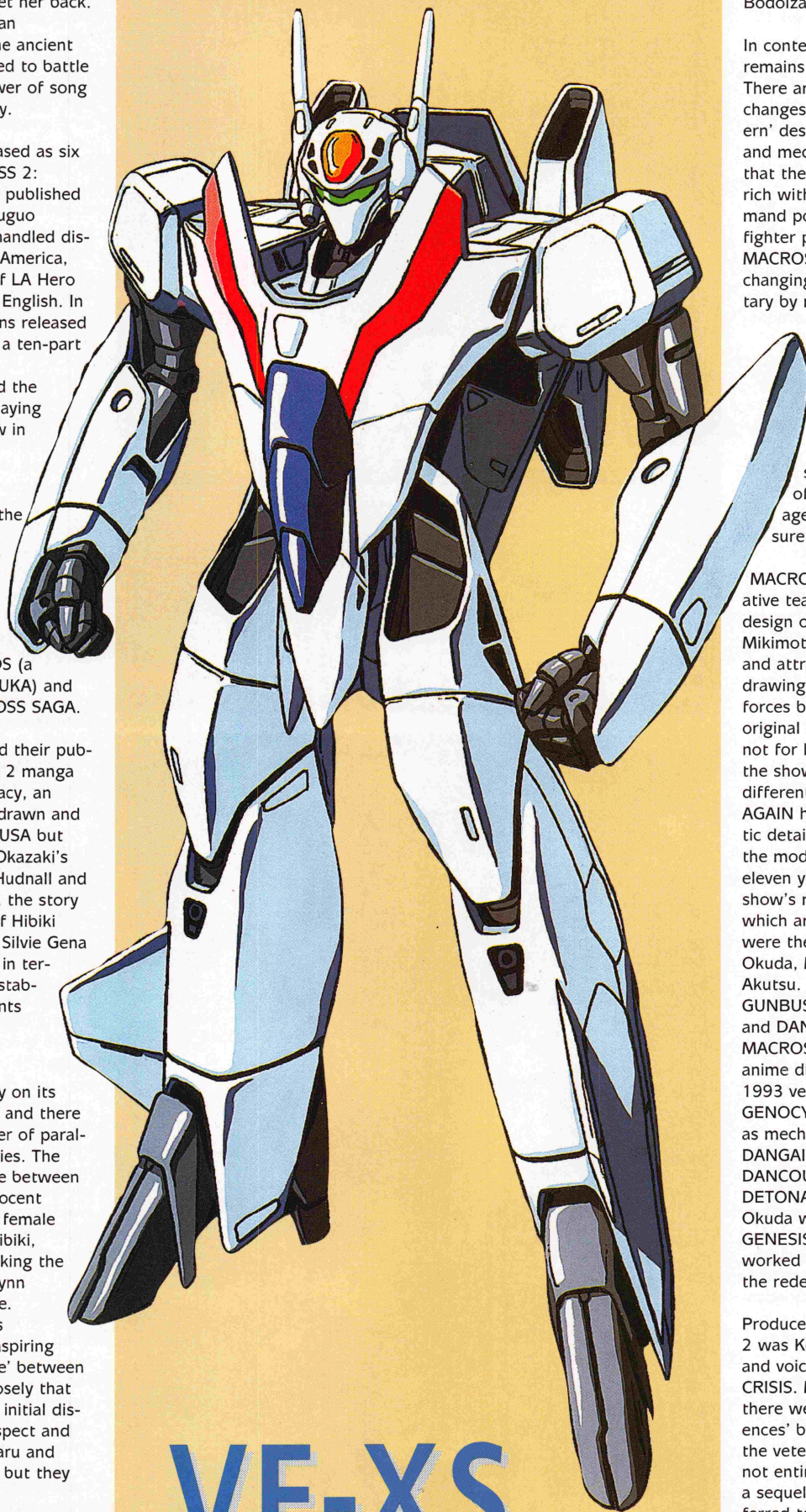
The role of honourable enemy moves from Britai Kridanik to Marduk commander Lord Feff. He,

too, comes to respect the humans' spirit and freedom, and finally rejects his unthinking loyalty to the murderous Marduk hierarchy. Emperor Ingues takes over the 'implacable warlord' role vacated by Bodolza.

In content, then, *LOVERS AGAIN* remains very similar to its origin. There are considerable stylistic changes, mainly in the more 'modern' design of the show's spacecraft and mecha. It is interesting to note that the original *MACROSS*, while rich with women in UN Spacy command positions, featured no female fighter pilots on the human side. *MACROSS 2* reflects the continually changing role of women in the military by making Silvie an ace combat pilot, but this is hardly a new idea. More original is the decision to make Hibiki a reporter: with his head-first attitude and array of high-tech news-networking devices, he seems very much a product of the CNN Gulf War coverage that saw so much exposure only a year before.

MACROSS 2 benefits from the creative team behind it. Character design once again fell to Haruhiko Mikimoto, who created a distinctive and attractive cast for the show. His drawings were one of the driving forces behind the success of the original *MACROSS* - indeed, were it not for his input, the entire plot of the show would have taken a very different path. His work on *LOVERS AGAIN* has both the dreamy, romantic detail that is his trademark, and the modernistic edge gained by his eleven years in the business. The show's mecha designs (many of which are nothing short of superb) were the work of Koichi Ohata, Jun Okuda, Masami Obari, and Junichi Akutsu. Koichi Ohata worked on *GUNBUSTER: AIM FOR THE TOP!* and *DANGAIO* before joining the *MACROSS 2* team. He made his anime directing debut in Artmic's 1993 version of Tony Takezaki's *GENOCYBER*. Masami Obari worked as mecha designer for AIC's *DANGAIO*, and has titles like *DANCOUGAR*, *FIGHT! ICZER 1*, and *DETONATOR ORGUN* on his CV. Jun Okuda was part of the team behind *GENESIS SURVIVOR GAIARTH*, and worked with Ohata and Akutsu on the redesign of the famous Valkyrie.

Producer and director of *MACROSS 2* was Ken-Ichi Yatagai, ex of AIC and voice director on *BUBBLEGUM CRISIS*. Mikimoto has stated that there were some 'creative differences' between him and Yatagai: the veteran character designer was not entirely happy about producing a sequel when he would have preferred to create something completely new. In addition, he believed that the idol singer concept was essentially outdated. Returning to



VF-XS

the theme for *LOVERS AGAIN* necessitated some compromises.

Conspicuous by his absence was Shoji Kawamori, who was central to the creative process on *MACROSS* and who joined Mikimoto again on *SUPER DIMENSION CENTURY ORGUSS*. Kawamori was reportedly uncomfortable about making a sequel to *MACROSS*, and was not involved with the production of *LOVERS AGAIN* in any capacity. Two years later, however, he was to change his mind in the most dramatic fashion.

In 1994, Kawamori began work on two more additions to the *MACROSS* saga, this time taking both mecha design and supervisory roles. This gave him almost total freedom to dictate which directions these new segments should take, but also left him with something of a problem: his ideas for the new *MACROSS* were incompatible with those postulated in *LOVERS AGAIN*.

There now followed a piece of story surgery which rivals anything committed by Carl Macek: Kawamori set about constructing a complete *MACROSS* timeline, a 'Rosetta Stone' of the series which would become the canon for all future productions in the milieu. Instead of trying to incorporate *AI OBOETE IMASUKA* and *LOVERS AGAIN* into his new template, he simply excised them, designating the cinematic release as nothing more than a historical 'film' created in the *MACROSS* universe itself, and removing *MACROSS 2* altogether. As if the work and effort put into the first official *MACROSS* sequel meant nothing at all, it is pushed to one side, and vaguely referred to as something that took place in an 'alternate universe'.

With the competition out of the way, Kawamori had an open road to his next two projects. *MACROSS PLUS* is set the 'official' *MACROSS* universe, but like *LOVERS AGAIN* features none of the original cast, and is instead designed as a 'side story'.

The side story concept is one whose origins lie more with *MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM* than anywhere else. Effectively, it describes a story that, while taking place in the same universe as the original, is not part of the original itself, and has no effect on the continuing narrative. *Gundam* side stories have appeared in everything from model magazines and comic specials (Bandai's *Cyber Comix* specialises in side stories from a number of settings) to fully-approved OAV series: *GUNDAM 0083 - STARDUST MEMORY* AND *GUNDAM 0080: WAR IN THE POCKET* are such entities.

Although part of the canon, *MACROSS PLUS* has a totally different look and feel to any of its pre-



decessors. The character designs are not by Mikimoto, but by Masayuki, who provided continuity and storyboards for *SECRET OF BLUE WATER* and character work on *DOOMED MEGALOPOLIS*. As a result, they have a harder, more sharp-edged look to them - edges reflected in their personalities. These are not the likable idealists and innocents of Mikimoto's *MACROSS*, but more flawed characters; arrogant, self-centred, and violent, they are sometimes impossible to identify with. Building a show around people you would cross the street to avoid is probably a risk, but Dyson, Guld, and Myung are perhaps perfect for the rarefied atmosphere of a side story, since these people are far too wrapped up in themselves to go about saving the world.

The technology in *MACROSS PLUS* has taken a quantum leap away from anything in any of the other segments. Telepathically-controlled Valkyries, virtual brains and artificial personalities all feature prominently, depicted in a level of detail that would have left any viewer standing in 1982. More than anything else, *MACROSS PLUS* is *MACROSS* for the nineties, *MACROSS* for the cyber-generation. Although the idol singer concept is still a central factor of the show, even this has been taken to extremes: Sharon Apple is a 'virtual personality', a holographic simulacrum with customisable brain chemistry. Kawamori has taken the essentially artificial nature of the idol singer phenomenon, and made the singer herself artificial.

In the face of such technophilia, *MACROSS 7* seems almost a retrograde step. In a way it represents the only true sequel to *MACROSS*: it features some of the original cast (Max and Miria Genus), it sets the story back on a traveling 'space fortress', and it is a TV series. The singing career of a young girl is central to the show, in a direct parallel to that of Lynn Minmay. Even the way that the alien Varuta turn out to be human is a recurring theme (in the series, Miria orders this information suppressed when it becomes known in episode 15: after the Zentradi and the Marduk, it would be far more shocking if the aliens were actually alien for a change).

The mecha in *MACROSS 7* is more immediately commercial than anything in previous segments: where the Valkyries of *MACROSS PLUS* and *LOVERS AGAIN* are spiky and sleekly efficient in design, *Macross 7* aims directly at the toy market with rounded, simple designs, some of which are actually endowed with Transformer-like faces. In contrast, Mikimoto has once again produced some superb character designs which capture the feeling of the original *MACROSS* very well.

MACROSS has come full circle with MACROSS 7: it is a show which can appeal not only to the MTV generation, but to their parents. There is a vast army of twentysomethings in Japan who grew up with Hikaru Ichijo and Lynn Minmay. Just like Max and Miria, many of them have children of their own, and must worry about them in the same way that Max worries about Mirenu. In this way, MACROSS 7 scores above PLUS - its characters care about each other, and so we can care about them, too.

It has taken MACROSS a dozen years to get back to where it started. During that time, the world has changed in ways that no-one in 1982 could have predicted. The end of the Cold War, advances in computer technology and genetics, Japan's position in a world economy, even the renewed popularity of anime itself - all of these factors have moulded the Macross universe into its new incarnations. Since the fall of communism and dismantling of the Soviet Union, pure invasion stories have become less popular, while the idea of individuality in place of mindless conformity begins its slow rise in Japan. Is this why MACROSS 7'S Varuta hunger after our spirit, rather than our world? The term 'Virtual Reality' had not been created when Hikaru Ichijo first sat in a Valkyrie cockpit, and now it is all around us. It is all around MACROSS PLUS as well: Sharon Apple rises above pure software to become human, and we see that people can be virtual, too. Both MACROSS PLUS and 7 feature Stealth fighters, since the Gulf conflict made them fashionable.

The world changes, and our way of seeing it changes too. Music, technology, morality, and economics mutate with every generation. Shows like MACROSS must mutate too - in order to make people want it, it must become what people want.

So far it has succeeded, homing in on current trends with the unerring accuracy of a guided missile. As long as it retains that ability, that targeted mutability, it will remain an integral part of the continuing history of Japanese animation.

Bibliography

The following publications have been invaluable in the process of researching this article. The author wishes to make it clear that no infringement of copyright is intended, and no attempt has been made to willingly break the terms and conditions of the copyright holders.

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The Donning Company Publishers
Kay Reynolds and Ardith Carlton

Robotech Art 2
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Kay Reynolds

Robotech Art 3: The Sentinels
The Donning Company Publishers / Starblaze Editions
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Robotech: The Role-Playing Game
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Ballantine / Del Rey
Jack McKinney
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Mike Baron

With special thanks to Anime UK Magazine, Manga Mania, Helen McCarthy, Jim Swallow, John Spencer, and all those who contributed information to this project.

MACROSS 2 Character Details: Hibiki Kanzaki.

Hibiki is not quite eighteen years old when the Marduk Imperial Fleet attack Earth. His personality, while flawed, is perhaps the most appropriate for his job, that of a reporter for the Scramble News Network: he is headstrong, self-centred, and willing to take frightening risks. His primary concern, at least during the story's opening stages, is to advance his career in SNN by getting the scoop of a lifetime - exclusive interviews with the alien Emulator known as Ishtar. In addition to a growing reputation as one of the best investigative reporters on the networks, Hibiki is also an accomplished pilot, and is often assigned pilot duties for SNN, flying private jets or VC-079's. It is this ability which leads him into direct conflict with the Marduk fleet, when he is asked to pilot a civilian Valkyrie for Dennis Lone, a grizzled and seasoned war correspondent. Lone teaches Hibiki that the truth is more important than a quick, flashy story, and his death teaches the young reporter that the truth about war is far more ugly and unpleasant than he had imagined.

Silvie Gena

An ace Valkyrie pilot and leader of her squadron, Lieutenant Silvie Gena is widely regarded as one of the best mecha pilots in the UN Spacy, with only her friend and teacher Lt. Nexx ranked higher. Silvie is nearly eighteen years old at the start of Macross 2, a resourceful and courageous young woman who loves the military and has dedicated herself to protecting the Earth and its people's. Not only is she an outstanding pilot, but she has a good knowledge of tactics and strategy as well - it is she who first expresses a concern that the Spacy is getting both complacent and inflexible.

Hibiki's attempts to spy on the military and his inaccurate news story about her (claiming that she was having an affair with a superior officer) set Silvie against the young reporter with a vengeance. However, as she gets to know him and sees his concern for Ishtar, she slowly begins to warm to him, and a hesitant romance blossoms unexpectedly between them.

Ishtar

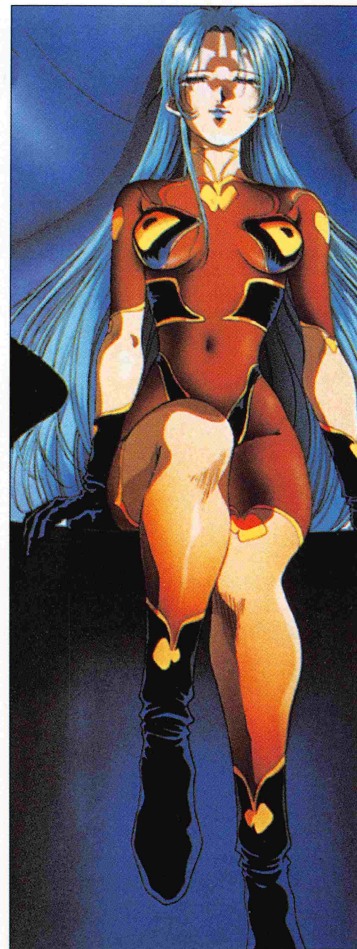
The beautiful and enigmatic alien Ishtar is many things to the Marduk: her Song of War is a rallying-cry and a subtle control for the Zentran clone-warriors, while to Lord Feff she is both confidant and friend. Ishtar is a kind, gentle, intelligent young woman, weary of conflict and eager to see her people progress past mindless aggression and slavish loyalty to Ingues. The human culture embodied by Hibiki Kanzaki is a revelation to her, and she becomes fascinated by Earth music and life. She also develops a serious (if brief) crush on Hibiki himself.

Ishtar finds herself questioning the Marduk's violent and suppressive philosophies, especially when she sees the vast space fortress Macross standing as a monument in Culture Park. At the end, it is her songs of peace which bring the conflict to an end, and set the Marduk on a less violent path.

Lord Feff

Stern, imposing, and ruthlessly intelligent, Lord Feff commands the ship on board which Ishtar serves as Emulator. He regards her as both an efficient asset and a good friend (if not something more), and when she is kidnapped he will stop at nothing to retrieve her.

Unlike his unquestioning troops, Feff is an honourable and intelligent man who cares about the welfare of those under his command. Ishtar's influence on him is strong, and when she resolves to end the conflict, it is Feff who stands at her side in defiance of Emperor Ingues.



Left: Promo flyers for Volume 1 and 4 of Macross II
Right: Ishtar
Below: Lord Feff, Ishtar and Hibiki



Arcade games are still hugely popular in Japan and people of all ages and all types play them. When game publishers Shinseisya decided to hold a national tournament to find the champion player for their game *VAMPIRE HUNTER*, 512 players between the ages of 7 and 45 got through the preliminary matches in Tokyo and Osaka to compete in the final on 3rd May 1995.

The eventual winner and champion *VAMPIRE HUNTER* of all Japan was 17-year-old high school student DAISUKE SUZUKI. He's been playing *VAMPIRE HUNTER* for years and has made a detailed analysis of all the characters so that he understands them perfectly. He said that he always jotted down whatever idea came to mind in his notebook, and when I asked him "May I show your notes to our readers?" he said "NO WAY!" with a smile. His prize was a special top-of-the-range game controller, but I think it's not as precious as his secret notebook!

Non-Japanese who live in Japan can enter the contest too. If you're a pretty good arcade game player, let's challenge him!

Another way anyone can participate at a tournament or event is to join the costume players. Game characters are very popular for cosplay and a remarkable number of the best costume players try new characters or present old favourites. Many game magazines give details of characters and their costumes especially for costume players, so it's easy to try new characters. And these costume players are too beautiful! Just look at these amazing costumes.

At the *VAMPIRE HUNTER* tournament the audience voted for their favourite characters. *MORRIGAN* was the most popular with 13.7% of the vote. *Bisyamon* was second with 11.5%, *Zabel* third with 10% and *ReiRei* fourth with 4.4%. There are so many characters, everyone can find one they like.

Right now, many cosplayers are busy making their outfits for the 48th COMIKET this summer. If you come to COMIKET, please experience it all - maybe even bring your own costume!

NATIONAL VAMPIRE HUNTER CHAMPIONSHIP

Our special correspondent **MASAAKI KATO** sends this report on Shinseisya's national *VAMPIRE HUNTER* tournament and costume play.



Top row, left to right: Bishamon, Morrigan, Bishamon Lizard, Jon Talbain. Below left: Suzuki-san, Felicia in playful mood. Center top: Photocall B



Bottom: Zabel, Morrigan, Rei Rei, Felicia, Zabel. Below right: More Morrigans, the incredibly cute Rei Rei

Jonathan
Clements
discovers
that life is a box
of
chocolates.

Japan R

What is gump rock? Whatever you want it to be. No-one is quite sure whether Shonen Knife are sharp satirists or dimwitted bimboes. Some critics have argued that their songs contain deep political messages, claiming to see environmental and political meanings in the lyrics. Then again, so many of the songs are so vacuous at face value that there is a high probability that they don't really mean anything. But that vacuity is one of Shonen Knife's main features. They are the musical equivalent of a Japanese pencil case, adorned with meaningless drivel that coalesces to form something entertaining. They've never claimed to be anything else. Since they stand up in front of paying audiences and undoubtedly entertain them, you have to concede that whatever it is they think they're doing, they're definitely doing it well.

Shonen Knife began their rise to fame in 1981, when founder-members Naoko Yamano and Michie Nakatani were Office Ladies at an Osaka corporation. Along with Michie's little sister Naoko, they began to meet after work to play around at being singers, and decided one day that they'd play just one gig before they called it a day. Fourteen years later, they're still going strong, although perhaps not in a way they would have dreamed of.

Instead of giving up after that first Osaka performance, the girls eventually sneaked off to America, telling their parents that they were going on holiday. The reaction of American fans to Shonen Knife has been considerably better than that of the Japanese, and it was in the States that Shonen Knife found true success. They came to Britain in 1992-3, where they not only played to tiny clubs scattered with bewildered drinkers, but managed to get on a slot supporting Nirvana. Kurt Cobain once said that seeing Shonen Knife turned him into a "...hysterical 9-year-old girl at a Beatles concert". Makes you think, doesn't it?

The Beatles have always played a significant role in Japanese music, and Shonen Knife albums often share styles and themes with the Fab

Four's later albums. Many Westerners subscribe to the view that Japanese people have no sense of humour. Therefore, Shonen Knife must be very, very stupid because their lyrics are so silly. What kind of morons would write a song about insect collecting? The same kind of morons who would write a song about a meter maid or a paperback writer; many of Shonen Knife's songs recall sections of **Magical Mystery Tour** and **Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band**. **Insect Collector** contains back-masked instruments in the same style as **Revolver**. The deadpan recitation of the *Tortoise Brand Pot Cleaner* songs (which exist in Hawaiian idyll and punk versions) merely tells us what it says on the packet, in much the same style of bricolage used by John Lennon on *A Day In The Life*.

The musical style, however, is very different, although Shonen Knife do have their fair share of Beatles-influenced songs, much of their music is a punkish kind of grunge. They are most often compared with the Ramones or the Ronettes, but their ability to mix such noisy sounds with such twee lyrics is something that only they could get away with. There are also one or two in-jokes waiting around for someone to spot. If you listen very closely to the background of *Burning Farm*, you'll hear a strangely familiar clunky sound; someone is playing the AKIRA theme on wooden blocks. There's an entire song named after a Natsume Soseki novel (*I am a Cat*), and *Butterfly Boy* even steals its basic riff from *Smells Like Teen Spirit*. But it's a very different song, with Michie Nakatani's soft, haunting lyrics overlaid on the top, and an organ solo reminiscent of The Doors. Since it's on the post-Nirvana **Rock Animals** album, we can assume that this was something they worked on in full view of the ill-fated grunge trio. Perhaps Kurt is watching them right now, underneath the great bridge in the sky, sending pencil-case messages from beyond the grave. Then again, back in the real world, perhaps he isn't.



Left to Right:
Naoko,
Michie,
Atsuko



ocks!



PRETTY LITTLE BAKA GUY

Making Plans for Bison; Summertime Boogie; I Wanna Eat Chocobars; Public Bath; Devil House; Antonio Baka Guy; Ice Cream City; Ah, Singapore; Riding on the Rocket; Kappa Ex.

This is the album that bridges the band's Japanese incarnation with its international version. The lyric sheets are in English, but the songs are in Japanese. Since some of the tracks have been excerpted from older Japanese albums, the sound quality is bad in places, and the group have got a lot better since, but this is **recommended** for anyone with an interest in Shonen Knife's Japanese origins.

LIVE IN OSAKA

Lazybone; Ice Cream City; Baggs; Kappa Ex; Antonio Baka Guy; Chains; Suzuisa Headbanger; I Wanna Be Your (Wo)man

Like most live albums, this is a grainy, grungy replay of the studio songs, with a couple of extra tracks thrown in to increase its value. But Japanese audiences are as quiet as mice, and the band are busy playing their instruments, so this comes off as little more than a low-tech studio album, with a few hesitant claps in the background and the odd demure 'arigato'. For Shonen Knife completists only, although John Lennon's estate is advised to buy and destroy as many copies of *I Wanna Be Your (Wo)man* as possible.

LET'S KNIFE

Riding on The Rocket; Bear Up Bison; Twist Barbie; Tortoise Brand Pot Cleaner's Theme (sea turtle); Antonio Baka Guy; Ah, Singapore; Flying Jelly Attack; Black Bass; Cycling Is Fun; Tortoise Brand Pot Cleaner's Theme (green tortoise); Devil House; Insect Collector; Burning Farm

Recommended as a first purchase. The first track sounds like the Sex Pistols with Hawaiian guitars, and it's one of Shonen Knife's best. It's also living proof that Japanese songs can be translated into English and still retain their original quality. I wouldn't want to let Shonen Knife loose on the national anthem, though. Many of these songs will already be familiar from earlier albums, but this time they have been translated and sung in English. There are some great tracks on this album, with good production values, and styles that range from the traditional to punk.

712

Shonen Knife; Lazybone; Diet Run; Blue Oyster Cult; Rain; Neon Zebra (92); My Favourite Town Osaka; Faith Healer; Redd Kross; White Flag; Superstar; Expo 90; Fruit Loop Dreams (92); The Moon World; Baggs.

TOUCHDOWN! JAPLISH RAP! The girls have gone a little bit madder than usual and kick off with a scratch mix that seems to incorporate cut-ups of some of their rave reviews. But the rap disappears to be replaced by some of their more Beatles-influenced tunes, including the immortal lyrics: "You don't need to be serious/ You don't need to be a walrus". For anyone with a silly sense of humour, the album is worth the price for 'My Favourite Town Osaka' alone, a funky tune with English and Japanese lyrics. To really understand the irony of the town, you'd have to imagine the Beach Boys singing that they wish they all could be Birmingham Girls. Good enough, but not a must-buy.

ROCK ANIMALS

Quavers; Concrete Animals; Butterfly Boy; Little Tree; Catnip dream; Tomato Head; Another Day; Brown Mushrooms; Johnny, Johnny, Johnny; Cobra vs Mongoose; Music Square.

Composed straight into English rather than translated out of Japanese. **Rock Animals** retains the band's previous form. *Concrete Animals* is a masterpiece of excruciating transposition: "Generally speaking every park has them/ Commonly they are at the sand box/ Occasionally they are vandalised by someone/ They are painted many colours". *Little Tree* is one of the problematic songs that have led some to claim an ideological stance for Shonen Knife. It's a sweet little song about a girl wanting to save her little tree from the caterpillar chewing on its leaves, but then the second verse sneaks in a reference to the caterpillar (tracks) on bulldozers destroying entire forests. And at the end we have the deep social comment: "Oh my sweet little tree/ Someday you'll be a big tree". Both this song and *Butterfly Boy* are packed with cutesy mispronunciations, such as 'catplar' and 'butfly', which add a kind of charm to the performance. Some people's English just never improves beyond a certain level, mainly because it sounds too loveable to correct. **Recommended** on the strength of *Butterfly Boy* alone; the other songs are a bonus.

And if that's not enough, there's even a Shonen Knife tribute album from Homestead Records called **"EVERY BAND HAS A SHONEN KNIFE WHO LOVES THEM"**. It includes contributions from such luminaries as Sonic Youth, Redd Kross and L7. If anyone has a copy of this, we'll swap it for one of Helen's ears. ["What's that?"- Ed.]

Thanks to Chrysanthemum for providing the material for this article.

AFX ROCK DOC 'SHONEN KNIFE'

There are over a dozen Shonen Knife albums, but the following ones are more likely to be found in the UK.

INCOMING AUGUST 1995

New release information from a top industry source

UK VIDEO RELEASES

Please note these are all in PAL format and WILL NOT PLAY on US video equipment.

ANIME PROJECTS

31st July **URUSEI YATSURA TV** (subtitled) volumes 5 and 6.

Recommended.
28th Aug **BUBBLE GUM CRISIS** (dubbed version) 3 & 4

OH! MY GODDESS vol 4 : EVER-GREEN HOLY NIGHT (subtitled)

28th Aug **BUBBLE GUM CRISIS** (Dubbed version) 5

OH! MY GODDESS vol 5 : FOR THE LOVE OF GODDESS (subtitled)

EAST2WEST FILMS

28th July **ADVENTURES OF KEKKO KAMEN** (episodes 1 & 2) (subtitled)

Delayed for BBFC cuts - see next issue's Newsline! **Recommended.**

23rd Aug **RETURN OF KEKKO KAMEN** (episode 3) (subtitled)

KISEKI FILMS

21st Aug **REI REI** (subtitled)

MANGA VIDEO

7th Aug **NEW DOMINION 9**

(English dubbed)

ANGEL COP 4 (English dubbed)

MACROSS PLUS 3 (English dubbed)

TOKYO : THE LAST MEGALOPOLIS (English dubbed)

WESTERN CONNECTION

No releases are planned for August, but watch out for news of future plans!

US VIDEO RELEASES

Please note these are all in NTSC format and WILL NOT PLAY on standard UK equipment.

AD VISION

ANGEL OF DARKNESS. Schoolgirls vs demons. 50 mins. English subtitled.

ADULTS ONLY.

BATTLE ANGEL. Both GUNNM OAVs on one tape. English dubbed.

CURSE OF THE UNDEAD YOMA.

Historical/ninja action. 90 mins.

English subtitled. **ADULTS ONLY.**

CUTEY HONEY VOL #1. Two episodes, 60 min, English subtitled.

ADULTS ONLY.

DRAGON KNIGHT. 40 mins of wacky fantasy lechery. **ADULTS ONLY.**

ICZELION 1 & 2. Hirano's latest. 60 min, English subtitled. **ADULTS ONLY.**

KEKKO KAMEN VOL #1. 55 mins, English subtitled, recommended.

ADULTS ONLY.

PRINCESS MINERVA.

Dungeons'n'damsels action comedy.

45 mins, English subtitled. **ADULTS ONLY.**

REI REI. Re-released in new 'milder'

packaging with a few seconds cut. **Still ADULTS ONLY.** English subtitled.

SAMURAI SHODOWN. 85 mins of gamebased action. English dubbed.

ANIMEIGO

BUBBLE GUM CRASH vols 1-3.

Each 45 mins, English dubbed. Also available as a prepacked set.

ANIME 18

DEMON BEAST INVASION 1.

Another tentacle job from the creator of UROTSUKIDOJI. English subtitled and definitely **ADULTS ONLY.**

MANGA ENTERTAINMENT

MACROSS PLUS VOL #3. Available both subtitled and dubbed - are you listening, Manga UK?

GIANT ROBO VOL #3. English dubbed, highly recommended.

PIONEER LDCA

KISHIN HEIDAN VOL #4. English dubbed.

TENCHI MUYO VOL #10-11. English dubbed.

PHANTOM QUEST CORP (YUUGEN KAISHA) VOL #2. English dubbed.

STREAMLINE PICTURES

BABEL II VOLS #1-4. Remake of classic series. 'retro' style charas and contemporary techniques. English dubbed.

BAREFOOT GEN. English dubbed version of the classic film about a Hiroshima survivor. Based on manga I WAS THERE, also released this month. 80 mins.

CASSHAN : ROBOT HUNTER VOLS #1-4. Remake of classic series. English dubbed.

US MANGA CORPS

CYBER CITY OEDO 808 DATA THREE. English subtitled version, Japanese voicetrack and music intact. Very highly recommended.

SORYUDEN : LEGEND OF THE DRAGON KINGS VOL #1. English subtitled, 97 mins.

TOKYO BABYLON 2-PACK : 2 English subtitled videos.

VIZ VIDEO

RANMA 1/2 ANYTHING GOES MARTIAL ARTS : COLD COMPETITION. Two episodes, English dubbed.

RANMA 1/2 ANYTHING GOES MARTIAL ARTS : IT'S FAST OR IT'S FREE. Two episodes. English dubbed.

RANMA 1/2 COLLECTOR'S EDITION VOL 3, VOL 5 - 2 English subtitled episodes.

FATAL FURY - LEGEND OF THE HUNGRY WOLF. English dubbed.

MERMAID'S SCAR. The sequel to Takahashi's MERMAID FOREST.

English dubbed.

UK TRANSLATED MANGA AND RELATED RELEASES

BLOOMSBURY

Respected mainstream publishing house brings manga to kids (of all ages...)

IRONFIST : VOL 1 JOURNEY TO MOUNT SHEN, VOL 2 KUNG FU BOY CHINMI - Takeshi Maekawa. 190 page pocket-sized volumes, unflipped. Recommended.

MANGA PUBLISHING

Print arm of Manga Entertainment LTD.

MANGA HEROES #8

MANGA MANIA #26 - manga strips, manga and anime news and reviews.

STREET FIGHTER III #13 - Masaomi Kanzaki.

US TRANSLATED MANGA AND RELATED RELEASES

All books b/w unless otherwise stated.

ACADEMY COMICS

Not, it must be said, the best of 'American manga' art. Special note : all ROBOTECH titles out this month feature the same Carl Macek interview.

ROBOTECH : ACADEMY BLUES #2 - Gibson & Bishop.

ROBOTECH - RETURN TO MACROSS #24 - Spangler & Abbott.

ROBOTECH II : THE SENTINELS

BOOK III #20 - Jason Waltrip.

ROBOTECH CLONE #5 - Rikki & Wolfgarth.

ANTARCTIC PRESS

Tenth birthday year for an innovative and confident creator/translation house.

COLLECTED SILBUSTER! Vol 1 - Ikkou Sahara. First four issues of the sisters-versus-alien-invaders manga, 136 pages.

SILBUSTER #10 - Ikkou Sahara.

GOJIN #3 - Kazuho Takizawa & Yutaka Kondo. Seven-part series set in old Japan with monsters causing mayhem.

STAINLESS STEEL ARMADILLO #4 - Ryukihei.

SMALL BODIED NINJA HIGH

SCHOOL #6 - Ford.

MANGAZINE #42 - a must-have, America's longest-running anime and manga zine and still one of the best, packed with informative articles and listings.

CPM COMICS

New venture by top US video house Central Park Media turns favourite anime into manga with help from Studio Go!

M.D. GEIST #3 - end of Eldred and Ohata's first collaboration as Geist faces the Final Terminator.

PROJECT A-KO 2 #3 - Eldred & Ott.

DARK HORSE

A range of superb translations keep them at the forefront of the market.

APPLESEED BOOK 3 SCALES OF PROMETHEUS limited edition hardcover - Masamune Shirow. 200 copies, full-colour tipped-in sheet signed by Shirow himself. 224 pp, pricey but nice.

GUNSMITH CATS #4 - Kenichi Sonoda. Japan's most passionate gun-rear mixes girls, cars, cordite and Chicago in a great action story. Highly recommended. **MATURE READERS ONLY.**

DIRTY PAIR : FATAL BUT NOT SERIOUS #2 - Adam Warren. Slimy Sleet is back and he's brought a friend. **Highly recommended.**

LEGEND OF MOTHER SARAH #5 - Katsuhiro Otomo & Takumi Nagayasu.

Post-apocalyptic story from the creator of AKIRA. **Recommended.**

MATURE READERS ONLY

OH MY GODDESS! PART 2 #7 - Kosuke Fujishima.

An overflow of cuteness as Belldandy gets on the back of Keiichi's bike for another school rally.

BUBBLEGUM CRISIS : GRAND MAL - Adam Warren. Trade paperback, 112 pp. **MATURE READERS ONLY**

APPLESEED DATABOOK - Masamune Shirow. Trade paperback, 128 pp.

HAMILTON COMICS

Semi-sentai stories from US artists.

MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS SAGA #2 - Markstein & Heebink.

MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS SECOND SERIES #4 - Harris, Gilbert & Morrow

SIRIUS

Vaelber SAGA POSTER - Curtainraiser to their first manga venture due this autumn, a signed Nobuteru Yuuki limited edition colour poster.

STREAMLINE PICTURES EDUCOMICS

I SAW IT - Keiji Nakazawa. Following last month's BAREFOOT GEN release, the original manga in full colour.

VIZ COMMUNICATIONS

American arm of Japanese giant Shogakukan, home of Rumiko Takahashi's manga and more.

NAUSICAA OF THE VALLEY OF WIND PERFECT COLLECTION #1, #2 - Hayao Miyazaki. #1 collects the first two volumes, now out of print, 264 pp. #2 has vols 3 & 4, 284 pp. Highly recommended.

NAUSICAA OF THE VALLEY OF WIND PART 5 #2 (of 8) - Hayao Miyazaki. The final chapters of the epic saga.

MAISON IKKOKU PART FOUR #8 (of 10) - Rumiko Takahashi.

Recommended.

BATTLE ANGEL ALITA : ANGEL OF VICTORY GN - Yukito Kishiro. 208 pp.

BATTLE ANGEL ALITA PART FIVE #2 (of 7) - Yukito Kishiro.

MANGA VIZION VOL 1 #6 - 96 page manga anthology. **Recommended.**

THE RETURN OF LUM - URUSEI YATSURA PART TWO #1 (of 9) - Rumiko Takahashi.

X/1999 #4 (of 6) - Clamp.

Supernatural action from Japan's top female creative team.

CRYING FREEMAN PERFECT COLLECTION - PORTRAIT OF A KILLER

- Koike & Ikegami. Vols 1 & II, 456 pp, lovely art. **MATURE READERS ONLY.**

SANCTUARY PART FOUR #1 (of 7) - Fumimura & Ikegami. **MATURE READERS ONLY.**

RANMA 1/2 PART FOUR #8 (of 11) - Rumiko Takahashi.

MERMAID'S MASK #2 (of 3) - Rumiko Takahashi.

ANERICA VOL 3 #8 - STAR BLAZERS, ONE POUND GOSPEL and new manga series.

TRADING CARDS

For those who enjoyed the CORNERSTONE AKIRA set and the ROBOT CARNIVAL set, American company BOOKS NIPPAN now has three new card sets for you, all available via your local comic shop or PREVIEWS magazine ordering service. All have 9 cards plus sticker and prism card to a pack.

DRAGONBALL Z HERO COLLECTION - 156 cards, art by Toriyama, cel repros, fan art.

SAILOR MOON HERO COLLECTION - on US TV this autumn!

YU YU HAKUSHO HERO COLLECTION - the TV hit of '94.

METAL WARRIORS SNES AMERICAN IMPORT KONAMI

Following the success of *Cybernator* a few years ago Konami once more delve into the world of large mecha with large guns with their latest Super Nintendo cart *Metal Warriors*.

This time around however, the design and programming has taken place in America with the assistance of LucasArts Entertainment. American efforts at capturing the Japanese flavour of video games are usually dodgy to say the least, but this time the Yanks have captured the Japanese "style" perfectly and managed to turn out an excellent piece of software too!

Set in the year 2102, the United Earth Government are under a state of siege from the forces of the Dark Axis. Led by the evil dictator Venkar Amon the Axis forces have waged a bloody three year war against the forces of Earth. Now, with only a handful of mobile armoured troops remaining, the Earth forces must make their last stand against the Axis forces. The fate of the Earth lies in the hands of the *Metal Warriors*!

Unoriginal plot and crap name aside, *Metal Warriors* is Action with a capital A. The player must guide their armoured trooper over a variety of missions in a bid to bring about the destruction of the Axis forces. Not content with the one mech available in *Cybernator* Konami have dished out a choice of six possible mechs to play with. These range from the Gundamesque Nitro and Havoc to the *Macross* Valkyrie-a-like Prometheus. Various mecha can be found during missions and, with a hit of the select button, out pops the tiny pilot who can then run around shooting, flying and creating havoc without the aid of battle armour. Doing this enables you to activate door switches and steal enemy mechs but beware, your mech can also be stolen by the enemy leaving you very vulnerable indeed!

Opening with a rescue mission in which the player has to locate and escape with a spy from the enemy base on Axis 5 the plot then unfolds as the game progresses. The missions are varied and interesting and range from capturing an enemy base to protecting the UEG flag ship from enemy attack and to locating and stealing a prototype craft from an underground Axis base in Chili. The difficulty curve is well defined with the player progressing just that little bit further at every attempt and, with only five continues, that should mean quite a few hours spent trying to save the Earth!



During your travels various weapon pods can be collected to beef up your mech's firepower. These range from shoulder mounted missiles and mine launchers to upgrades on your mech's standard weapon. Needless to say, repairs can also be encountered along the way which is just as well as some of the later levels are quite tricky indeed.

Despite not being quite so graphically polished as *Cybernator*, *Metal Warriors* still looks pretty good. There are some nice graphical touches and designs and the cutscenes are nicely done too. The music is inoffensive and the spot fx are as expected with some of the explosions literally shaking the screen. The options available manage to make an excellent game even better. Apart from the one player mode, there is also a two player head to head game where each player can pick one of the six mecha available and battle it out with each other to the death. You can literally end up chasing the tiny pilot around the playing area while he desperately tries to avoid your shots and find a new mech, causing much hilarity in the process. Other options enable you to insert your name as the main character, turn the cutscenes off and even test drive the mechs to get a feel for their control methods!

This is an ace game and a recommended purchase, Konami serve up another winner 90%

ZEKUSHI-DO BANDA

Ever wondered what would happen if your model of a Gundam G came up against a Valkyrie? Well Bandai have announced a new toy that will let you do just that! Well, sort of.

Coming out sometime this year for the Sony Playstation is Bandai's new game *ZEKUSHI-DO*, robot models that you connect to your Playstation and then proceed to battle it out to the death.

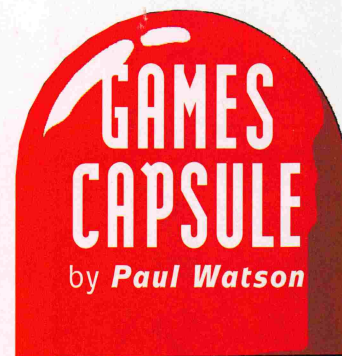
To play the game, two robot models and one piece of software is required. The robots are connected to the Playstation via the memory card sockets and the software is basically a polygon based battle game with the robots and their statistics appearing on-screen.

The designs for the mechs were by Hiroshi Yokoyama designer of the robots for Squaresoft's impressive *Front Mission* and are made up of a variety of parts including the upper and lower body and the arms. The robot's statistics vary depending on your choice of body parts and a computer chip inside the model keeps a log of the various battles that ensue. Battle Information is stored in the model robot and experience can be built up to make your mech the toughest on the block!

To date no launch or price information has been released although the actual models were previewed at this year's Tokyo toy show at the Makuohari Messe recently and proved to be quite popular with the Japanese gaming press. As ever, more information will be passed on when we get it.

Also announced at the Tokyo toy show were a variety of software titles for the various systems available at the moment.

Banpresto's catalogue gave glimpses of eleven software titles to be released over the year. These included Super Pachinko Great battle and Super robot



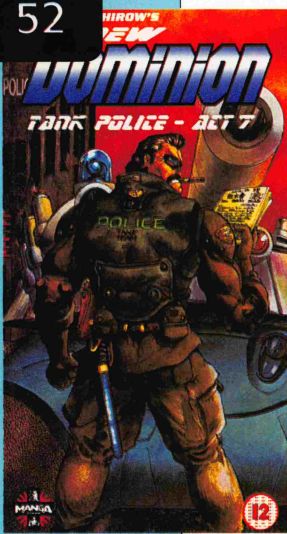
big battle G for the Super Nintendo. Akira Toriyama's *Go Go Ackman 2* for the Super Nintendo and Nintendo Game Boy were also featured with the SNES version being a platformer and the Gameboy version having the pleasure of being an adventure/action game. *Fist of the North Star* for the Sega Saturn could be promising beat-em-up but, considering the past attempts at transforming Ken to the home software front, we'll wait until it turns up before excitement ensues. Meanwhile the Playstation is to be the home for the rather strange looking *Dokioki*. Featuring some very surreal graphics, this adventure game could be worth a second look on its release. Also on Banpresto's release schedule were a few role-playing games, with *Granhistoria* and *Verunu World* looking the most interesting with both being set in futuristic worlds.

Sega were also in force at the show and were pushing the Saturn with announcements of some hot looking software. *Virtua Fighter 2* is still in production at the time of writing but Sega plan to use this game to beat the Playstation in Japan. Current screen shots do look impressive to say the least so look out Sony. *3D Robot Shooting* is the working title of a very cool looking polygon based strategy/shooting game for the Saturn. Featuring some very impressive graphics and robot designs similar to those of battletech this one looks promising. Sega's coin-ops *Virtua Cop* and *Sega Rally* are also due out for the Saturn at some point with *Virtua cop* being closer to completion and looking quite nice too!

Obviously this is just a very small taster of the software on display at the show. We'll be looking at the rest of the information over the next month and, needless to say, if it's worth knowing it'll be printed here.

Thanks this month go to Tomoko Yokoma for the translation work and "The Corn" for the software. Arigato gozaimasu!





VIDEO SCAN

LEGEND OF THE 4 KINGS

Chapters 9&10. Cert 12.
MANV 1076 £13.99

Roll up, roll up folks for perhaps the most amusing, and entertaining pair of episodes to come from Legend of the Four Kings in a while. After last month's samey, lack-lustre offering the ludicrous tale of the dragon brothers manages at long last to give us some more 'plot' to play with.

Contained within it's 90 minute run you'll find not one, but two dragons turning together, the President of the USA getting more than a bit irritated at the Mulligan Foundations habit of borrowing military resources, shape shifting androids, nifty handbag sized neutron bombs (with a nice line in handcuff accessories), mythological Chinese figures, the four sisters (none of which wear dresses), mysterious red curtains, eerie white spirits, and half a zillion cops chasing our heroes.

While not edge of seat nail biting stuff, or so fast you're blinded by the action, this pair of episodes nips along at a tidy rate, hardly the slouch which I've accused this series of being in the past. The dubbing is to Four Kings standard. Not exactly transparent, a bit wordy and heavy handed. But then again Legend of the 4 Kings isn't just tongue in cheek; there's a whole side of ham in there as well.

The final judgement then is that episodes 9&10 a certainty an improvement and gives hope that the ending of the series will at least be entertaining. Though not 'quality' anime, it's ideal for younger viewers, or older fans who want to lie back and have some simple super-powered fun.

ROBERT LYN DAVIES

URUSEI YATSURA - ALWAYS MY DARLING (UY MOVIE 6)

Anime Projects, AP 095-001, 77 mins, cert PG, English subtitles.

Is there an unlimited supply of alien princesses heading for earth

in their super-powered craft, intent on securing possession or Ataru Moroboshi's body? It's certainly starting to look that way, but Lupica, latest in a long line of Royal babes, has something else in mind. She needs to get the ultimate love potion from a distant stronghold at the far flung edge of the universe, and she's been told that only the possessor of the greatest lust in the universe can do it. With it, she wants to make her shy childhood sweetheart stop worrying about the difference in their social standing. When Ataru hears about the potion prospects of all the babes on Earth as his loveslaves dance enticingly before him, and when Lum hears about it too she can't help dreaming that it might make Ataru love her alone. The chaos caused by the pursuit of the potion is in the usual UY tradition. Director Katsuhisa Yamada, latest in a long line of distinguished UY directors, and the Kitty Films team deliver their usual Rolls-Royce production standards. There are no surprises here, but it's a very entertaining film with plenty to enjoy.

HELEN MCCARTHY

OH MY GODDESS! Episode 3 : BURNING HEARTS ON THE ROAD

Anime Projects, AP095-007, 29 min, cert U, English subtitles.

The third episode of this romantic confection of spun sugar and sexism introduces us to Skuld, the youngest of the trio of sister goddesses, who gets tired of being alone in the heavens, trying to deal with the bugs in the Ultimate Force System all on her own. She wants company, but most of all she wants her sister Belldandy back. So she comes to Earth to find her, popping up most disconcertingly in Keiichi's bath. But Keiichi has other problems than tiny goddesses popping up out of the water where the soap should be; his classmates have put him up to represent the Auto Club in the University Drag Race, and put Belldandy up as a side bet on victory. Meanwhile Skuld, quite properly incensed at seeing her sister behave like a cross between a doormat and a doting mother to Keiichi, has decided to do anything she has to to get her sister back home ... but in the end she realises that everyone has to find their own road to heaven, or hell. Gorgeous animation, beautiful design, pretty music, and a charmingly naive end credit sequence in Skuld's honour all combine to make this video so seductive that it could seriously damage any impression-

able girl who sees it. Have the BBFC got a category for the irresistible glorification of female subservience? Somehow I doubt it.

RORY DONNELLY

ROBOTECH Volume 6

Kiseki Films, KIS 93035, 75 mins, cert U, English dubbed.

In general you can always trust Spencer's Law : no-one is going to buy later episodes of a series unless they've already invested in the earlier ones. ROBOTECH 6 could be a notable exception, since there's plenty here to recommend it, even if you haven't touched the previous tapes. There is the artful editing of the Phantasm sequence, in which previous episodes are convincingly, seamlessly recycled in a 'dream sequence'. We also see the opening acts of the 'courtship' of Max and the alien Miria, which will eventually lead to the characters and events portrayed in MACROSS 7. Most important of all, there is the FAREWELL BIG BROTHER episode, in which Roy Fokker makes cartoon history by dying before the finale. A script by committee highlights the good and bad indiscriminately. There are some truly classic exchanges, such as the Zentraedi in mufti debating if 'disco' is a form of torture, and inspired eyecatch sequences in which an alien warrior commands us to sit through the commercials. However, there are also some dreadful howlers : "Why the long face? You here to bury Caesar?" asks our all-American hero. Elements good and bad combine to make this an interesting 'historical' anime, even for non-ROBOTECH fans. But Shakespeare it ain't, sirrah.

JONATHAN CLEMENTS.

ANGEL COP 2

Manga Video MANV 1082
30 mins. Cert 18

The Disfigured City sees the return of Angel and her fellow gun-bunnies from the Special Security Force, saving Japan from international thuggery in typically explosive style. However, while counter-terrorism is still the show's central theme, part 2 shies away from the edgy realism of the first episode and moves back into Psychic Mayhem territory.

Raiden is missing after kissing the tarmac at the end of part 1, and someone has very thoughtfully cleaned all trace of the accident away. Meanwhile, the Red May terrorist group find them-

selves on the receiving end from more than the cops - a trio of paranormal vigilantes has got it in for them in a number of interesting ways. Holed up in a Tokyo skyscraper, the hapless communists are assaulted on two fronts, as the SSF and a teleporting Brian May lookalike fight for the privilege of blowing them apart. As if that wasn't enough, enter an indestructible Robocop clone from stage left. But isn't that mechanized voice slightly familiar?

While not a bad story, and very slightly toned-down in bloodletting from the first part, Angel Cop 2 is let down by some seriously awful dubbing. The move from cop thriller to science-fiction is slightly disappointing, too: I would have thought that there is quite enough violent sci-fi on the market, while straight gun-play shows are rather thin on the ground. Still, for what it is - an undemanding helping of guns-and-gore - Angel Cop 2 delivers.

PETER J. EVANS

NEW DOMINION TANK POLICE 7

Manga Video. MANV 0085
30 mins. Cert 12.

This is the third installment of Manga's new Dominion series, and possibly the best of the bunch so far. Leona Ozaki's routine harassment of criminals is interrupted by the high-speed arrival of a huge cargo truck. While Leona and AI attempt to repair the scuffed Bonaparte and give chase, it turns out that truck is running on computer guidance and is busy delivering a huge consignment of high explosive direct to Newport City centre.

From here on the story becomes a nicely-plotted race against time. As the truck hurtles towards the city, the Chief of the Tank Police sets his usual histrionics aside to organise a series of rather ill-advised roadblocks, and Mayor Weatherby tries to coordinate infiltrations into the truck's computer guidance. Minutes and miles tick away, and impossible decisions have to be made - who must be sacrificed in order to save Newport?

Far better in pace and content than previous installments, Dominion 7 is set up in classic disaster movie style, with a little more of the Dianippon conspiracy thrown in. The story also drops the comedy for a while and imparts, finally, a real sense of danger into the proceedings. While some of the leading voice actors just aren't going to improve, others are quite ade-

quate, and the video as a whole thing can more or less shimmy. A good all-round effort, and essential if you are aiming for the whole Dominion saga on your shelves.

P J EVANS

NEW DOMINION TANK POLICE 8

Manga Video. MANV 1088
26 mins. Cert PG.

After Dominion part 7 I had high hopes for this, the fourth installment of Manga's New Dominion series. Unfortunately, despite further corporate intrigue, exploding flour, and a high Puma Twins quotient, part 8 ultimately fails to deliver.

Threatened by new laws which will cripple their profits, the Dai Nippon Giken corporation are accelerating the production of their new 'virtual narcotic'. The disc containing the refining process for the drug has been stashed inside Bonaparte, and the company wants it back: enter Anna and Uni, venturing into Newport's photochemical smog to steal the mini-tank and deliver it to the bad guys.

Unaware of their hidden cargo or Leona's enraged pursuit, the feline mercenaries deliver the tank on schedule, and are just about to pick up their ultimate reward when Leona and AI decide to join the fun. What results is standard Dominion fare - an overlong chase sequence peppered with strained humour and some botched attempts at conspiracy theory.

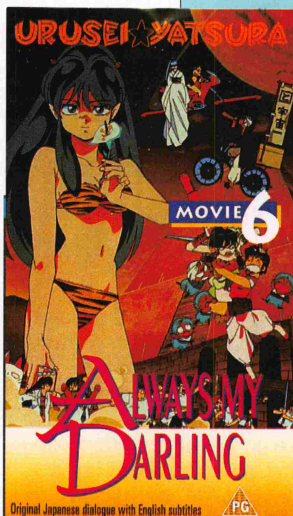
While Dominion 8 is by no means the worst part of the series - the animation is well up to standard, especially the character graphics, and some of the action sequences work quite well - it is let down by its script and pacing, both of which are riddled with inconsistencies. The leaps from frenetic slapstick to dull corporate backstabbing are badly handled, leaving us with little more than bog-standard disposable anime. Watch once, discard, and hope for better things with part Nine.

PETER J. EVANS

MEGAZONE 23

Manga Videp. MANV 1083
100 mins. Cert 15.

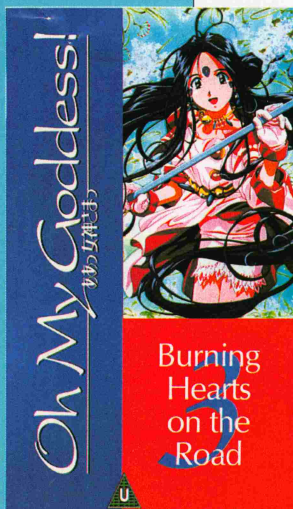
As noted on the back cover, Megazone 23 is actually the second and third installments of a three-part OAV series, which necessitates a lengthy (and somewhat boring) introduction to



Below: Can love be controlled by magic? Lum contemplates a very potent potion in URUSEI YATSURA: ALWAYS MY DARLING



COBRA



set up all the surprises for later. The story is set in Eden, last city on Earth and descendent of one of the original Megazones - vast colonies which hauled Humankind off into space while the ravaged planet repaired itself.

Eiji Takanaka is a member of a dislikeable little clique, less a street gang than a collection of neo-yuppies who spend their time hanging around cafes and taking bets on who can chat up who. All the male members of the group (the women presumably having something better to do) are addicted to a VR computer game with the unfortunate title of Hard-On, but despite this (or maybe because of it) Eiji is inducted into the organisation known as the XI, and trained to combat the terrorist activities of 'netjackers'. Of course, the rulers of Eden are actually nasty and the terrorists are the good guys, so it's up to Eiji to change sides at the last moment and run off with a computerised idol singer.

All this is rather confusing and curiously uninvolved. All the interesting characters are relegated to the sidelines, leaving only the clean-cut heroes and stereotyped villains to actually do anything. Lots of fashionable jargon about cyberspace, control corporations, and netjacking only serve to confuse matters further. All in all, Megazone 23 contains some stunning technology and battle sequences, moments of utterly appalling animation, and not a fat lot else.

PETER J. EVANS

SUPER DIMENSION CENTURY ORGUSS 02 - Part 2
MANGA VIDEO MANV 1086
60 mins. Cert 12

I take it back: Orguss 02 has got a lot more to do with the original than I first thought. However, telling you any more than this would spoil the surprise...

In the aftermath of their escape from the giant decimator, reluctant soldier Lean and his mysterious fugitive companion form an uneasy truce in order to evade capture and return to Revilia. As they bicker and scam their way towards the border and relative safety, vaster events are moving into play around them. Revilia and Zafrin have officially declared war, unaware that a third power has arrived on the scene: a sleek and powerful new decimator of unknown design and amazing capability, and piloted by someone with a vested interest in Lean's new ally. Meanwhile, the giant Zafrin decimator - now running on full power with a complement of spare psykers to

replace the burnouts - heads inexorably towards the Revilian lines.

This really is a cracking video: the voice acting is good, the animation excellent, and the pace and plot expertly controlled. Secrets are revealed that weren't even hinted at in the first two episodes, and the carefully observed character interplay is contrasted vividly with the realistic and quite harrowing aftermath of battle: the scenes in the church are especially disturbing, like Bosnia with subtitles.

Technically fine, and packed with great characters and detail, Orguss 02 is mecha opera at its very best. Unashamedly recommended.

PETER J. EVANS

MACROSS PLUS Part Two
Manga Video, MANV 1074,
45 mins. Cert PG

The second part of this high-speed saga chops the throttle a ways to a slower place for its opening scenes: If the draw for fans in Part One was to see the swift new Valkyrie designs and the mecha action, Part Two's hook is the glossy debut of Sharon Apple, digital diva. With a stunning gig equal to Jean Michel Jarre's and Pink Floyd's special effects budgets gone bananas, virtual Sharon does her set while mingling with the punters, including our hotshot hero Isamu Dyson. Way beyond MEGAZONE 23's EVE, Sharon is quite surely Nth generation software. Try running that on your Saturn... This episode shows us more of the link between Sharon and her manager Miyung. Isamu's swept-forward design YF-19 takes to the blue and the rivalry between him and Bowman intensifies. There's not a great deal of plot furtherance here; rather it's a mix of set-pieces and subtle advances with a genuinely intriguing twist to keep it fresh. What is missing, however, are the sparks of backstory that dotted Part One. Instead we must make do with a musical number and a battle scene. The opening concert is moody and ambient, and together with the closing head-to-head punch-up between Bowman's night-black YF-21 and Dyson's snow-white YF-19, it about covers the entry ticket. The animation is good once more, with Part One's standard maintained throughout, but plotwise we're at the halfway mark now and I expect things to start speeding up before part Four's climax... If not, then MACROSS PLUS's hype will have been just that, hype.

JIM SWALLOW



LIVE & KICKING

by JOHN SPENCER

This will be John Spencer's last LIVE & KICKING column for AUK - look for a brand new Hong Kong movies column in issue 6!

A nice variety this month, and first up is

THE GUYVER : DARK HERO
MIA V3430, cert 15, 100min, dub, £12.99

A sequel to the original Guyver live action movie (released here as *MUTRONICS*). Directed by special effects wizard Steve Wang, and with the close involvement of LA Hero, this drops the tongue in cheek humour of its predecessor and is much closer to the original manga and anime series. In a situation reminiscent of David Bruce Banner in *THE INCREDIBLE HULK*, Sean is now a reluctant hero, taking on occasional drug-lords as he searches for the secret of the Guyver Unit. Tormented by recurring dreams, he eventually recognises the images on a TV report about cave paintings at an archaeological dig and, hitchhiking there, he discovers that all is not what it seems, as some of the crew are government agents and some work for a sinister corporation. I don't think I'm giving too much away to say that the dig involves an ancient spaceship of the Creators and may hold the secret of the Guyver itself.

Along the way there are some nifty martial arts and aerobatics, a fair bit of gore, and the special effects are used sparsely but effectively - one particularly nice sequence has Sean jumping off a cliff and transforming mid air (remember, kids, don't try this at home!) And if the Zoanoids do look like men in suits, that's probably inevitable with head to head battles. (*ALIEN* looked convincing because you never really saw the creature.)

All in all, rather predictable, but with good production values; a lot of fun which should satisfy fans of the animated *GUYVER* and monster fans in general.

Next, **THE TIGERS**
Eastern Heroes, EH0017, cert 18, 110 min, letterbox sub, ú13.99

Starting off like a Chinese version of *21 JUMP STREET*, this follows the lighthearted adventures of five undercover cops as they wisecrack their way around the latest case; but things are about to change. Two of them decide to keep a suitcase

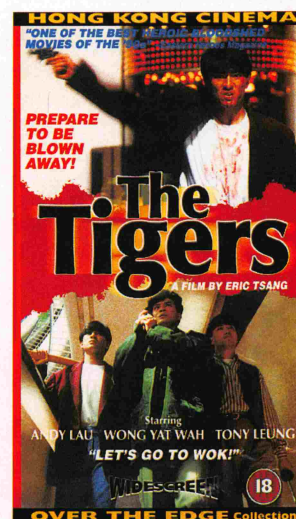
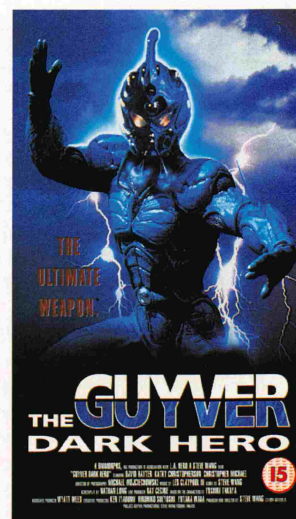
full of money from a drug bust and while the others don't agree, they all agree to keep quiet for the good of the group. They should watch more movies, as things turn sour when a psychotic gangster starts to blackmail them. It's downhill all the way from then on, and not all of them will make it out alive. Not many at all, actually. Well, one, actually. This is unusual for a Hong Kong cop show in that it eschews the normal over-the-top histrionics in favour of a more subdued, almost 'Western' focus on characterisation. The camaraderie of the friends is well handled, they are all treated as individuals with normal flaws and failings, and the violence is more realistic than the usual cop flick. Actions have consequences, and the subdued tone gives this more impact. However, this is Hong Kong, after all, and the climax features a blood soaked orgy of retribution as a spectacular finish to the unfolding web of events the ground found themselves in. Okay, so it's largely their own fault, but isn't that the essence of all tragedy? And the film looks terrific - the photography is gorgeous, with terrific composition and lighting, and the acting is uniformly excellent. Recommended among action cinema not usually renowned for such depth.

Finally, **KURONEKO**
Tartan Video, TVT1129, cert 18, 99min, wide/sub, ú15.99

This is director Kaneto Shindo's second feature and has many similarities to the previous, highly regarded *ONIBABA*. Set in a historical time of civil war, the main characters are once again a wife and mother. Left behind when a peasant is abducted into one of the feuding armies, they are viciously raped to death and their home burned by marauding samurai. However, their spirits crave revenge, and invoking dark forces they return as feline spirits, dedicated to killing all samurai and drinking their blood. So far, so good.

However, the aforementioned husband/son is not dead, and being the only survivor of a pitched battle, has actually done quite well for himself. In fact, he has been made a samurai. And his first mission? Rid the forest of the blood sucking monster ... The central dilemma of the protagonists is well handled - whatever they do, they lose (just like real life). based on a folktale, *The Cat's* revenge, this would not be out of place beside the classic *KWAIDAN*. Shindo is a master of using land-

scape to create mood; in *ONIBABA* it was a wide expanse of waving rushes, here it is a claustrophobic grove of bamboo evoking a dream-like surreal atmosphere. While lacking the hypnotic power of *ONIBABA*, this has much to recommend it. The acting has a suitable intensity, and the plot doesn't develop as the (Western) viewer would expect. Worth buying, but get *KWAIDAN* and *ONIBABA* first!



OH NO! NOT ANOTHER ONE!

Can you have too many Japanese language books? JONATHAN CLEMENTS thinks so ..

Japanese slang is big business for the specialist publishers, but it is getting increasingly tiresome for the book reviewer. Many publishers must feel the same way, but someone should point out to them that they are often competing with themselves. Kasschau & Eguchi's *USING JAPANESE SLANG* shares shelf space with several closely-related titles: *MAKING OUT IN JAPANESE*, *MORE MAKING OUT IN JAPANESE*, *JAPAN'S SEX TRADE*, *OUTRAGEOUS JAPANESE*, *TOKYO PINK GUIDE*, *JAPANESE IN ACTION*, *JAPANESE STREET SLANG* and *HOW TO BE INSULTING IN JAPANESE*, and most of these titles are from the same publisher. That's not including the ancient tomes from Boye DeMent, many of which are now mercifully out of print. For many years, the funniest and most engaging book on the language was Jack Seward's *JAPANESE IN ACTION*, although as time passed it gradually became outdated. In 1992, Peter Constantine's *JAPANESE STREET SLANG* siezed control of the slang market, even outstripping a new book from Seward himself. Since then, it seems, it has been open season on slang, with new books coming off the presses faster than the Japanese could invent new swear words for it.

I'm all in favour of lurid concentration on sex and bodily functions, although I would feel a little conned if I bought all of the above books only to discover that they all contain similar scraps of information. The focus of most of these books is somewhat insulting to the Japanese; we wouldn't expect a slang guide to Britain to devote a quarter of its length to life in a Soho strip joint. But my main concern about many of these books is that they are often released in the UK with little thought for their market. As a translator working in anime and manga, I encounter slang every day, and while I never expect to find a totally comprehensive guide (a linguistic impossibility), I am often disappointed by the performance of these books as reference tools. If they were there for the 'general reader' that would be something, but the definition of 'general reader' is a moot point.

We in the United Kingdom are used to a surfeit of Americanisms, but many of the books are aimed explicitly at the American expat community in Japan. Witness *USING JAPANESE SLANG*'s cover blurb with all its talk of G-rated and rated language, and of one's "Japanese friends". *USING JAPANESE SLANG* is

designed for a very narrow age-group, with rudimentary Japanese skills in places (it skips too many of the basics to assume otherwise) and a rather puerile interest (shared by the staff of *ANIME UK*) in learning the swear words. It is with dismay that I must report it has failed even to meet these undemanding criteria.

USING JAPANESE SLANG is, it has to be said, packed with interesting information. Unfortunately, the information in question has been organised in such a sloppy manner that it renders the book virtually useless. Part of the blame, it seems, lies with the book's previous incarnation as a series of newspaper columns. There has been an attempt of sorts to organise the information by subject, but it will be of little use to many potential buyers. It is too dry to read for reading's sake, and too confused to be used for reference. The reader can pick a general subject area, such as gangster talk, and trawl through it for the required word, but there is no other way of accessing the treasures contained within. Compare this with Peter Constantine's superb *JAPANESE STREET SLANG*, which is not only organised alphabetically, but includes both English and Japanese indices. It is also written with a verve and clarity sadly lacking in *USING JAPANESE SLANG*, and contains countless sample sentences of dubious but comedic value. You can have a good snigger over *USING JAPANESE SLANG* behind the bike sheds, but you would laugh a lot louder reading through Constantine's hilarious examples. Furthermore, if you ever had to use Japanese slang professionally (ahem) you could lean on Constantine as a reference tool, whereas *USING JAPANESE SLANG* is of little use.

This frustration is compounded by the uneven research employed throughout the book. The introduction makes a swipe at similar works, including, we may infer, Constantine's, by claiming to dig a lot deeper into etymological origins. In places, this can be very interesting, although I would have appreciated it if the authors did not regularly remind me how interesting it was. In other places, they are forced to admit defeat, since slang is often hard to explain. Infuriatingly, points are often buried in a tangle of complex and inconsistent phraseology, or skipped altogether as if the

explanation were obvious to anyone, or not worth the authors' consideration. We are told that *esu* (S) is sex and *eru* (L) is a lesbian, but it takes a while to find out that *ecchi* (dirty, lewd) is the pronunciation for H. We are told that *Shinajin* is a derogatory term for a Chinese, but not that its origins rest with the English pronunciation, transposed into kanji.

Yet another annoying facet of *USING JAPANESE SLANG* is the equally uneven approach to information about Japan. Thanks to Kasschau and Eguchi, the reader is left in the dark about the legislation regarding photos of pubic hair, although a large part of one chapter is devoted to it. Was it a legal or a moral censorship? When was it lifted - we are told only that the lifting was reported in the press in 1992 - and why? In one laughable instance, the authors start getting indignant at the price of pornographic magazines, pointing out that they are a rip-off at three times the cost of printing. Bearing in mind that *USING JAPANESE SLANG* retails at £9.99, and probably cost a fifth of that to produce, they are on very shaky ground indeed.

Since the authors state that their column was printed over a decade ago, perhaps the publication of this book is an attempt to scrape back some of the money Constantine has made, arguably partially on the fruits of their labour. But, despite the implied seniority of Kasschau and Eguchi, you are unlikely to close their book with a deferential air. You are far more likely to be sadly shaking your head as you put yet another "comprehensive guide" to Japanese slang on your bookshelf. For all the snippets of interesting data it contains, I cannot recommend *USING JAPANESE SLANG*. Although this is supposed to be a review of Kasschau and Eguchi, it can only end with an endorsement of Peter Constantine's *JAPANESE STREET SLANG*, for the linguist and general reader alike. Constantine's top position is safe, at least until the next 'comprehensive guide' rolls off the presses.

Anne Kasschau and Susumu Eguchi, *USING JAPANESE SLANG*. Yenbooks, 1995. ISBN 4900737-36-4.
Peter Constantine, *JAPANESE STREET SLANG*, Tengu Books, 1992. ISBN 0-83480250-3.

A Comprehensive Guide

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After Neil Allan's comments on the lack of British anime industry in issue #3, here's an industry viewpoint from animation cameraman TIM FRANCIS of Cardiff, Wales.

Dear Helen,
Many congratulations on the new series of ANIME UK - the quality of content and presentation continues to be brilliant ... compliments to all concerned.

In Vol. 1, N° 3, some comments were made in answer to Neil Allan about the lack of anime style work in the UK. I agree with the comments made in your reply: I would also add that lack of production is not for the want of trying. God knows just how hard the animators and ascriptwriters have worked to break away from the cute kiddie-oriented animation commissioned by the TV companies here. Most Japanese anime projects are based on tried and tested manga storylines/character designs. UK animation producers do not have this kind of comic production behind them to support non-television films. As a result the work we do is based prudely upon the television companies' commission, and that unfortunately

is often both cheap and geared to the younger market. Until the television companies take courage and back more adventurous work then the situation is unlikely to change. I work as a senior animation cameraman, filming anything from commercials to full cinema films (features include AMERICAN TAIL 2, WE'RE BACK and ASTERIX IN AMERICA). Recently I've been working with the new Animo computer animation workstation - in fact we are about to start a full series using this Cambridge developed package, similar to Disney's CAPS system. Basically the traditional hand drawn characters are scanned into the computer before being electronically painted and matted onto the backgrounds; output can be to film or video. (Incidentally, the final rendered images are TIFF files, ie Mac compatible.) I understand that several Animo units have been shipped to Japan. The animation skill base is here in Britain, and the electronic advantage is rapidly countering the benefits of using cheap far East paint'n'trace facilities. so, if only someone would just commission the work ...

From a cameraman's point of view, it would be helpful when reviewing anime films or series to include the name/s of the Director of Photography/senior cameraman.

Also, if you are able to include studio photos of animators working at their discs, cameramen slaving away at their machines, etc, then a huge amount of technical information can be derived from such a shot; in this way, American trade magazines like Cinefex have helped push back the technical frontiers, simply by disseminating technical information. The same is true in the case of animation: as we learn how something was done we can build upon it. Keep up the excellent work on ANIME UK, it may sometimes feel like a thankless task but it's very much appreciated.

HELEN: Thank you for the kind words, but comments like your last

one make me feel a bit of a fraud. I think I have the nicest job in the world, and I'm being complimented just for doing what I love. Neil Allan's views seem to have struck a chord with quite a few readers and it's good to have an industry viewpoint. I know many people in the British animation industry can't even imagine a situation where you have a score of animated weekly TV episodes, plus a dozen made-for-video animation releases and animated feature films coming out month after month, but oh, how they would love to see it happen! If only the accountants, and the Great British Public, could be convinced that animation is just another way of making films ...

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Dear Helen,
Just a quick 'congratulations!' message, well done, the mag is fantastic. I am not an avid anime follower but I am really pleased to find a decent magazine dedicated to anime. Features such as DBZ are great, just the right balance between text and artwork. AUK, the EDGE of anime!

Mata ne - RICHARD MELVILLE : staff writer,
MACHINE 16

HELEN : *Praise is always welcome and I'm particularly flattered by the comparison. Thanks for taking the time to write.*

Dear Helen,
I wonder if you could tell me why in so many anime the genitals are never drawn in? It seems strange when the writers put in so much opportunity for the characters to take their clothes off.

PAUL MARSHALL, Wakefield, W. Yorks., UK

HELEN : *Both Japan and Britain have censorship laws, although attitudes to sexuality differ considerably; and both have to consider the possibility of home video falling into the hands of a younger age-group than that for which it's intended. I suppose that has something to do with it. What really baffle me are the anime where the genitals have been digitised over (with a chequer pattern, soft focus or unfocussed pixels); that means that first of all they've been drawn in, then (nearly) wiped out*

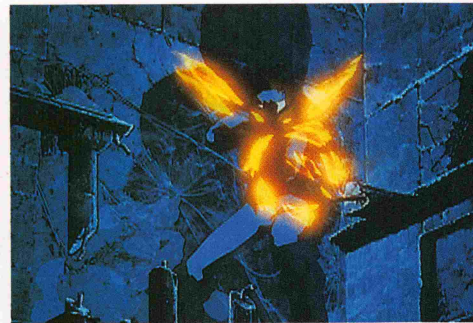
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Dear ANIME UK,

I am a big GUYVER fan and after spending many hours watching the animated series and the live action film DARK HERO I came up with these questions :

- 1) Have BIOMORPHS (the people behind DARK HERO) any plans to make another GUYVER film?
- 2) Apart from the comic strips, have MANGA or any other anime house any plans to continue the GUYVER series with another volume of episodes?
- 3) Is there ever going to be a GUYVER VS POWER RANGERS film as I really do hate the Rangers because they are so corny and a bunch of softies. It would really make my day if we could see GUYVER tearing the Rangers apart in a fierce frenzy of slow, painful slaughter (preferably live action). I am in total agreement with Jim Swallow regarding the Rangers.
- 4) Don't you feel that many characters such as GENOCYBER and POWER RANGERS have been copied off THE GUYVER in terms of physique? If so, why? Can't their designers think of different designs?

You might find that I am being totally biased towards the Rangers but the truth is they stink! The fact that they used plastic toys as weapons is not good entertainment at all. It is comforting that companies like MANGA and KISEKI FILMS have not made any anime ver-



sions of something so poorly done. Finally, may I express my sincere gratitude to pat Munson-Siter for her GUYVER overview. This has told me a lot about the GUYVER and its capabilities.

SHER SHAH, Huddersfield, W. Yorks., UK

HELEN : *First of all, to answer your questions :*

- 1) *Not at present, but that doesn't mean they never will!*
 - 2) *As 1 - more episodes aren't planned right now but they could be in future.*
 - 3) *I very much doubt it!*
 - 4) *No, I don't think so. POWER RANGERS have developed from a long series of liveaction SENTAI (team) shows which started long before THE GUYVER was thought of, and all the characters in these are similar in some respects. GENOCYBER and THE GUYVER have both developed out of a tradition of mecha/body armour design which has been around in anime for quite a while, but applied in a different way. If you ever get a chance, look at the mecha designs in the old TV/OAV series AURA BATTLER DUNBINE and you'll see many similarities there!*
- As for MANGA and KISEKI not 'making anime', very few Western companies do join in the production process. MANGA has begun to be involved in the production of anime by joining forces with Japanese companies to make the anime version of Masamune Shirow's manga GHOST IN THE SHELL, and KISEKI are not yet involved in anime production. Some Western companies make co-productions with Japanese companies, but with very few exceptions all the anime seen on video and TV in the UK to date has been entirely created in Japan and dubbed or subtitled for overseas audiences by UK companies.*

Dear Helen,

Recently at a film fair I was able to get my hands on a copy of a manga-in-motion movie called ZEIRAM 2. It is a really excellent movie, which comes across as a sort of violent POWER RANGERS with much better costumes and FX. The only downside to the film is the fact that it only has Japanese dialogue and credits, meaning that the finer plot details have so far eluded my comprehension.

As I am a fairly recent reader of your magazine, I suppose it is possible that I may have missed a review of it in your pages already. At the very

least, could you tell me who the main actors are (all I have been able to gather from the movie is that the main character is called ILYA, but I am unsure if she is meant to be a robot or just a plain old super-heroine), and a brief plot synopsis so that I may put the action into a better perspective? Your help would be most appreciated.

MIKE PARKIN, Chelmsford, Essex

HELEN : *That's what you get for buying a bootleg tape from an unscrupulous dealer! (Although I suppose it could have been a second-hand Japanese original, but that's very rare.) A legitimate company selling a tape licensed for UK release will have it dubbed or subtitled into English. The young lady is actually a bounty hunter and her name is spelt IRIA (though Japanese pronunciation confuses many people since the L and R sounds are very similar). Zieram, the big ugly guy with the clam-head and long cloak, is a criminal and she's on his tail.*

Dear Helen,

In your ANIME WORLD column in SUPER PLAY 21 you mentioned that Manga Video (MV hereafter) had picked up the UK rights to the RANMA 1/2 anime. 'Oh joy!' quoth I, 'gotta get hold of that.' Then in SUPER PLAY 30, Tony Mott said in his GAMEFREAK column that MV had cancelled the RANMA anime release. They'd only planned to release the OAVs, but decided against it as they didn't want to release 'literally hundreds of hours of TV series footage' to enlighten rookies to Saotome Jnr. This, I can tell you now, is THE most FEEBLE excuse I have EVER HEARD!! I have a RANMA - ography in a copy of ANIMERICA and the total length of ALL the RANMA 1/2 anime available - both TV series, both movies, all six OAVs (when they've been done) and the two BATTLE OF THE SONGS OAVs - is 89 hours, 36 minutes. That is hardly 'hundreds of hours', wouldn't you say?

To me it's quite clear that MV are not giving anime fans what they're screaming their smegging lungs out for. If they know what we want they'd have released the RANMA OAVs instead of LEGEND OF THE 4 KINGS. They'd also do the STREET FIGHTER II anime, DRAGONBALL Z, SLAM DUNK and MAISON IKKOKU (anime and live action). Instead, they've bought up the rights to RANMA 1/2 - all of it by the sound of things -

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and they're not going to release it. Hm. Yeah. Riiiiiiight. Thanks guys, that sounds like JUST what we want alright.

PHIL HALLIWELL, Shotton Colliery, Co. Durham, England.

HELEN : 90 hours isn't 'hundreds', but it's a huge commitment, even for a company with the full weight of Polygram's financial backing. The problem is that each episode/tape release of a long series costs as much to dub or subtitle and put into the market as a single title; and although rights acquisition costs per half hour MIGHT be lower than for an equivalent movie or single OAV, the overall cost of acquiring 90 hours is obviously 90 times the whole cost of acquiring one hour. And it's all hanging on one title.

With RANMA 1/2 the problems are compounded even further. The biggest Englishspeaking territory, the US market, is already sewn up by VIZ VIDEO so costs can't be set against prospective extra sales there. In a number of European countries the series has been on TV or is out on video, so no more sales there. The whole cost of acquiring and releasing the material has to be recouped from UK sales. And RANMA 1/2 might not appeal to the mass market so well as to more 'otaku' type fans.

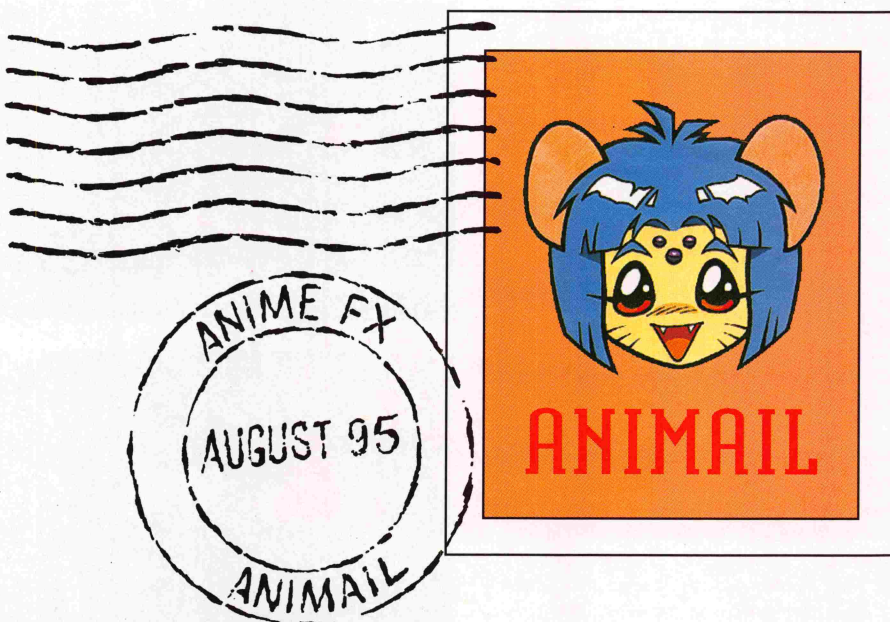
However, even if MV have acquired the rights to the whole of RANMA 1/2 on video (and this is not certain), most Japanese companies don't sell rights for an indefinite time period; the normal term is 2 years and there is usually a requirement to release by a certain date, or the rights revert to their original holders. So RANMA 1/2 will eventually come on to the market again, and maybe someone else will pick it up.

Jonathan, first of all I want to thank you and ANIME UK for bringing us the article on LUNA SEA (AUK #1). If it sounds like I am being critical towards you on this article, please understand that my gripes are minor. I wholeheartedly agree with most of it and the general feel of the article. However I think you went a bit extreme in your description of Japanese youth. Admittedly, I only know a tiny slice of Japanese youth, but among my friends there are a girl with a nose ring and three or four guys with tattoos. I understand what you are trying to say when you make the comment about looking tough by getting a perm, but I think you were playing up the Western stereotype a bit much.

I also disagree that Japan cannot produce real rock bands. "What about trf and Southern All Stars" If you're looking for some real punk crap, look for a band named 'Ebi'. I am also in love with the band 'Mad Capsule Market's', and think they have even more potential in the US than Luna Sea would. My knowledge of Japanese music is only as wide as I was able to make it in my short 3 months stay, so I'm sure there are many better examples as well.

In addition to the 'Japanese youth are inferior in coolness' generalization, you also grab on to a few other generalisations which Westerners enjoy. For example, if there is any instance of someone showing respect to another, we thrust it into the Confucian ethic and use it as an illustration of someone respecting their elders or their family, or whatever. The new singer letting the bassist and guitarist do the talking is just right. Hell, Jason Newsted of Metallica still talks like the new guy, even though he's been in the band as long as he has.

I love the new magazine. I think the old one was



great, but this new format and content is outstanding. I'd like to thank everyone at ANIME UK for their work to help promote some genuine understanding of Japan among anime fans.

ROB KETCHERSIDE, Seattle, WA, USA.

JONATHAN : You're absolutely right about the Metallica comparison. I wish I had thought of that when I was writing the article. If I'd remembered the discrepancy between interview appearances from Jason Newsted and Lars Ulrich, I wouldn't have placed so much importance on the role of Luna Sea's J and Inoran. It's ironic because one of my main jobs at ANIME UK is hunting down dubious generalisations before they go into print. In this case, my mind was obviously on something else and I didn't give my own work the same treatment.

As for your other comments, after careful consideration, I cannot agree. At no point do I suggest that Japan cannot produce 'real' rock bands, or that Japanese youth are 'inferior in coolness'. On the contrary, I actually present an argument very similar to your own, that we should not try and map our own definitions of 'coolness' onto an alien culture. 'Cool', let us not forget, is an American term (and a very subjective one at that) and as such can only really be applied in the American world. You would be no more 'cool' walking down the street in Seattle with a Luna Sea t-shirt, than your Japanese friends would be hanging around in Osaka proclaiming their love for Slayer. I think you would be the first to admit that your friends in Japan are not 'average', if they were they would be listening to home-grown pop like their 'average' American counterparts.

I actually make the point in the article when I refer to mis-read cultural cues. This naturally extends both ways. Buying Japanese albums on the basis of cover image alone, as I have had to on many occasions, can often be a strange experience. This is because we often apply our own cultural cues to an image we see. Witness *Demon Kogure's* solo album, which looks like a KISS but contains 1950's ballads. Similarly, while a perm looks unbelievably 1970's to us, it's the height of yakuzadom in Japan. Our beloved editor recently sliced the top of her finger off with a scalpel while preparing a page layout for issue 4. To us it's merely a funny example of how she literally puts her own blood into the magazine, but if she walked into a crowded Japanese eleva-

tor tomorrow, chances are she'd have it to herself because she would be mistaken for a gangsters moll.

If you look at my *Seikima-II* article in issue 17, you'll see me say that there are many excellent bands in Japan, but that all too often they are unlikely to achieve foreign attention because their Japanese lyrics close their true intent off to the majority of their listeners. I hope my work in this magazine, as well as the rhyming song translations I have prepared for many UK anime releases (eg *HUMMINGBIRDS* and *USHIO & TORA*, plug plug) will help a few non-Japanese speakers to appreciate the quality of Japanese music. In answer to your recommendations, I'd also like to add that I fully intend to cover both trf and Southern All Stars as soon as I have assembled enough material to do them justice.

Thank you for your letter; your feedback is very much appreciated, and I'm very glad to see that the Japan Rocks columns are generating so much interest. We'll get *Seikima-II* in the British charts yet, just wait and see.

Dear Helen,

I'm a 20-years-old Bahraini animefan studying in a Kuwaiti college. I'm very fond of your lovely magazine. I was searching for this kind of magazine for a long time.

I'm a big fan of anime and manga since I was a kid. Anime was available in my country - Bahrain - since 1979 and maybe before that. When I was 7 years old I watched anime on TV such as : - GRANDIZER, MAZINGER Z, STAR BLAZER, and they're translated to Arabic - our language and most of the characters' names are changed to Arabic names.

I like to draw anime characters and I also created some characters with pretty stories. I hope I can contribute them to ANIME UK pages, and see them in a future issue.

Can you do me a favor? I want to make contact with the famous Japanese artist. Can you help me, please? And thank you so much for reading my letter.

SHAHEEN MEARAJ, Khitan, State of Kuwait.

HELEN : Thank you for your lovely letter and for your artwork. You have a nice style and some very good ideas.

I will keep your artwork carefully and will cer-

tainly consider it for publication. Don't be disappointed if you don't see it in print for two or three months; because it takes a long time to produce each magazine and ship it round the world, we can't print material we receive right away.

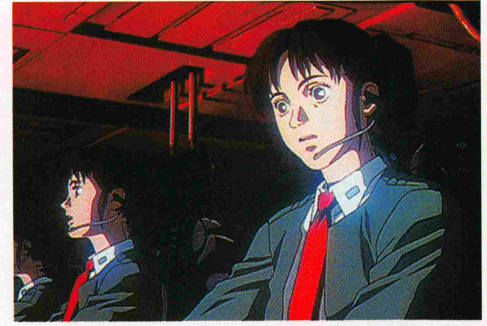
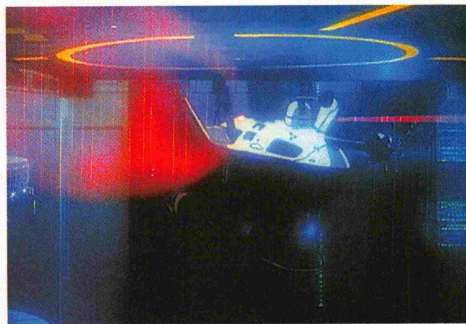
I think that if you enjoy writing your own stories and creating characters, you should talk to one of the companies which encourage manga-style artists in the West. ANTARCTIC PRESS is the oldest 'western manga' company and is always happy to look at new art. You can get their submissions guidelines by writing to them at 7272 Wurzbach Suite #204, San Antonio, TX 78240. And GAIJIN PRESS is a new British venture which also wants to see new artwork; write to them at 2 Birkdale Drive, Immingham, Grimsby, North Humberside, DN40 2LB, UK. I'm sorry, but we can't give out private addresses for artists. It really isn't fair to them because they are very busy people who work hard and don't have time to deal with lots of mail at their homes. However several big publishers now have offices in the West, and they will be able to forward letters to their head offices and artists in Japan.

Dear Helen,

First of all congratulations on a great magazine. Please could you answer me a few questions. I'm a great fan of PROJECT A-KO and I was wondering where I could get the rest of the OAV's. I've asked in a lot of comic shops but they don't know where I can get them. Also I've been wanting to learn Japanese and I'd be grateful if you could point me in the right direction, because I'm a total beginner - could you recommend some books? Thanks!

DAVID TRIM, Hayes, Middx, UK

HELEN: Sadly, many of the great videos you read about in magazines aren't yet licensed for release in the UK - the only way you can see them is at conventions and via fanclub tape libraries. And the four PROJECT A-KO OAV's fall into this category at the moment, though MANGA VIDEO, who released the film, are about to release the first OAV. Maybe the others will follow! All the A-KO titles are available in the USA, and if you have a multistandard or NTSC-capable vcr and TV, you may like to contact Sheffield Space Centre, Forbidden Planet Mail Order or a similar specialist shop to see if



they can order the American tapes for you. AUK ran a big feature on A-KO in our third 'oldtype' bi-monthly issue, back in 1992, and as I write I hear that MANGA MANIA is about to run a feature later this year, so look out for that! As for learning Japanese, contact your local education authority to enquire about evening or part-time classes. You don't say how old you are, but if you're in school maybe your head teacher would be willing to consider letting you take Japanese GCSE or A-level classes? JAPANESE FOR BUSY PEOPLE is an excellent book, and for learning the script systems a good start is KATAKANA GANBATTE, reviewed in AUK #1.

Dear Helen:

The main point that I would like to make is that some anime titles are becoming very expensive for the amount of watching time you actually get. The best example that I found of this was DEVIL HUNTER YOHKO Part 2, costing a massive £15.49 for about 45 minutes. Although the RRP (recommended retail price) was about £9 or £10, HMV blasted it up to £15.49 in less than two weeks. They also have a reputation for adding an extra 79p on all other titles, unless they have a sticker saying 'HMV PRICE' which in

actual fact was the original RRP.

Virgin also do the same sort of thing but to a lesser extent than HMV. The main difference between HMV and Virgin is that when Virgin puts a sticker on saying 'VIRGIN PRICE' it is usually less than the RRP. Again, the best example that I found of this was the GUNBUSTER tapes costing £7.99 compared to the RRP of about £11.00.

The other thing I would like to comment on is the actual companies involved. Although Manga Video opened the door to anime in England all those years ago, & is still the largest UK company, I think that KISEKI has done the most for the UK fans. My reason for saying this is that KISEKI is the only company I know of that releases its titles on both dubbed and subtitled formats.

They are also the only company at the moment to bring out some of the 'golden oldies' that no-one else wants, like ROBOTTECH and YAMATO. It is for this reason that I respect them so much (and also for their boxed sets).

Manga Video also deserve a pat on the back for showing anime at the cinema & for bringing out comics such as Masamune Shirow's APPLSEED. I think that some sort of accreditation should be awarded at this year's reConTanimeTed convention, perhaps a Tezuka Award for the most fan dedicated company, or something along those lines.

HELEN: You've got some interesting points. Manga Entertainment's US arm has a very positive attitude to producing both subs and dubs, and the UK company may well follow their lead if the demand is there. All the UK anime companies pay very serious attention to what their customers want because that's how you stay in business; maybe big retail chains have enough high-street cred to worry less about attractive pricing, but if the customer carries on buying without complaint, you can't blame them for taking the money! Ask the store manager in your local store why prices are higher on some items than you can find elsewhere, and if the explanation doesn't please you, vote with your money! As for a UK convention award, it's a good idea. The name of Osamu Tezuka is, quite properly, cherished and guarded by Tezuka Productions and so one couldn't simply name an award after him - or any other person for that matter - without getting permission, but a 'Convention Anime Award' could certainly be made if a convention wished to do so. Conrunners, over to you!



NOT SO MUCH A CONTEST, MORE A CLEAR-OUT

Last month Helen and Steve went to the States for the two big California anime conventions. Now, you know what happens when they go to the States they bring home two extra suitcases, bust the weight limit on the plane and mail back boxes galore because they just find SOOOOOO much great anime stuff out there.

Well, it finally got too much, and some of the stuff they brought back with them has to go. We have a wodge of assorted anime cels, a roll of posters and a box of assorted goodies that just won't fit into the toy cupboard. So YOU have a chance to get a goodie bag of anime surprises! In fact, some of you have TWO chances - because we have five goodie bags for general consumption, and five reserved for AUK subscribers.

Subscribers don't have to do anything at all to be in with a chance - we will draw five subscriber numbers at random and mail off the goodies to the winners. They can also enter again for the other draw. To keep this one really simple (who wants to think in summer?) all you have to do is put your name and address, plus subscriber number if you have one, on a postcard and send it to us at ANIME FX, 70 Mortimer Street, London W1N 7DF, UK, to arrive before 31st August 1995. On 1st September we'll make the draw and send out the goodies straight away

EVERYONE'S A WINNER ...

... but, sadly, only one winner can receive our fabulous ORIGINAL AKEMI TAKADA SKETCH, and that lucky reader is

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In our HEAVY GEAR competition in issue 2, Jim Swallow asked "What do the initials VOTOM stand for?". The answer, of course, was number 2, Vertical Oneman Tank for Offense and Maneuver. The first right answer out of the bag came from

**JONATHAN LANE, 70 WYN-
GATE ROAD, SPALDING,
LINCS., PE11 1NT, UK** who gets a copy of the HEAVY GEAR game kindly donated by those wonderful people at DREAM POD NINE.

There's another prize of a copy of the MARAUDER 2017 sourcebook, given by our good friend MUGHI of the Bay Area Anime Society and this goes to

**JOE McCULLOCH, 34 CURZON
ROAD, PRENTON, WIRRAL, L42
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If you weren't a winner this time around, don't give up - keep on entering our competitions and your day will come! GANBATTE KUDASAI!



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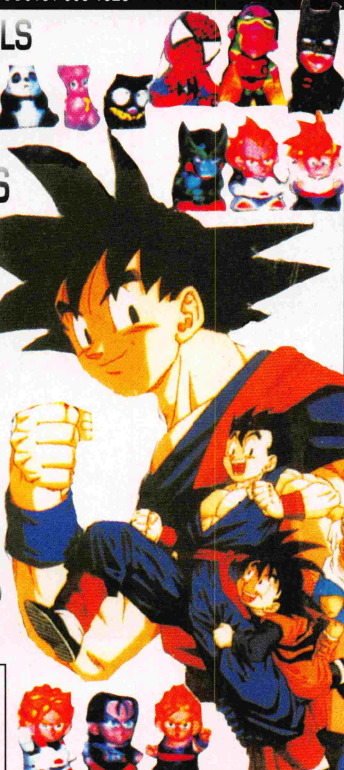
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FANSCENE ROUNDUP is the place to go for info on anime and manga fanzines, conventions and all kinds of fan activity. Make sure your fellow-otaku know about YOUR fanzine or get-together - send details to FANSCENE

ROUNDUP, ANIME UK, 70 Mortimer Street, London W1N 7DF, UK. Please note : convention info has to reach us AT LEAST three months before the convention date.

ATTENTION SHOJO AND YAOI FANS!

If you are into shojo (girls') manga and its many related genres, or if you've heard about shojo and want to know more, then SHOJO SHUUSAN is the club for you! Formed by Kim E. Marlo to help shojo fans old and new come together to share information and extend their knowledge and enjoyment, the club will produce a fanzine with news, reviews, information and opinion as well as fan art and fiction; the first issue is due this summer. The non-profit club is aimed at adults only - a signed statement that you are at least 18 years old is required. If you are interested, write for more details to KIM E. MARLO, 179 McNear Drive, San Rafael, CA 94601-1446, USA.

CONVENTION CIRCUIT

We will periodically list forthcoming conventions with an anime/manga programme content anywhere in the world. Listings are free but all information appears at our discretion and MUST reach us at least 3 months ahead of the convention date to be sure of getting into print. When writing for convention information it always helps to enclose a self-addressed envelope with EITHER a stamp (for a convention in your own country) OR two International Reply Coupons (for overseas conventions, available from main Post Offices). ANIME UK is not involved in running any of these conventions, so please don't phone us for information about them - talk to the organisers!

EUROPE

NO MORE HIROSHIMAS, 28-30 July, London, UK, weekend of talks & screenings. Guest FRED-ERIK L. SCHODT. Details: Amanda MacIntosh, BM NMH, London WC1N 3XX, tel (+44) 171 278 9908, fax 278 9844; email hiro@camintl.org.

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RETAIL ROUNDUP

August, Glasgow, UK. Multimedia convention, hordes of guests inc. Gerry Anderson, Samuel R. Delaney, anime showings amid all the other bells & whistles. Details: Intersection, Admail 336, Glasgow, G2 1BR.

F.A.C.T.S. IV, 1 October, Gent, Belgium. Multimedia convention, anime programme. Details: Emmanuel van Melkebeke, Parkplein 5, B9000 Gent, Belgium.

ReConTanimeTed, 3-5 November, Birmingham, UK. Dedicated anime con, 3 video rooms, much fun. Details: L. Sharman, 13 Prescott Close, Banbury, Oxon, OX16 ORD, UK; email davidrow@ryookki.demon.co.uk OR denzil@chiisai.demon.co.uk

BENELUXCON 21, 24-26 November, Grobbendonk, Belgium. Special feature on SF animation. Details: SF-BELGIUM, c/o Patrick van der Wiele, Witgerstraat 3, 9310 Herdersem, Aalst.

USA

OTAKON 1995, 1-4 Sept, State College, PA. Dedicated anime con, guests inc Toren Smith, Adam Warren, Robert DeJesus, 'Kondom'. Details: OTAKON, 661A Waupelani Drive, State College, PA 16801, USA.

ANIME WEEKEND ATLANTA, 27-29 Oct, Atlanta, GA. Dedicated anime con, guests inc Bruce Lewis. Details: AWA, PO Box 13544, Atlanta, GA 30324-0544, USA, email awaad-min@peach.america.net

ANIMEast 1995, 10-12 Nov, East Brunswick, NJ. Dedicated anime con, guests inc Monkey Punch, Mio. Details : ANIMEast 95, Radium Dynamix Inc., 1544 Irving St. Suite #201, Rahway, NJ 07065, USA

AMERICAN & EUROPEAN COSTUME PLAYERS

We'd like to encourage cosplay outside Japan, but we need your help! If you would like to see

your convention masquerade featured in our columns, send us good, clear colour photos of the contestants and the following details: name of convention or event, date and location, name of Master of Ceremonies or organiser if there is one, and number of entrants. Make sure that all the pictures are labelled on the back with the name of the character portrayed, and if you want them returned please enclose sufficient return postage and be prepared to wait several months because of our long print schedules. Things DO get lost sometimes so please DON'T send negatives or irreplaceable pictures. We can't promise to feature all your pics but we'll print as many as we can. Don't leave it all to our friends in Japan - get into costume and get snapping!

NEW DOJINSHI PRESS

FUTURE FACTORY is the brainchild of Keith McDowell, an exponent of Cute whose work has appeared in GAIJIN PRESS publications; now he's branching out with his own manga company and the first title on the new label is LUCY'S IN DEEP, the story of a pretty young policewoman on undercover duty as a highschool student. Issue 1 is out now, 36 A4 pages in glorious black and white with a colour celbased cover. You can get a copy for £1.92, including post and packing, from Keith at 'Keston', Low Road, Badingham, Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP13 8NF, UK. Please make cheques and POs (UK currency only) payable to K. E. McDowell.

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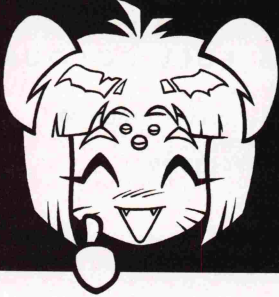
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RELAX TAKE A MIND BREAK



Another quiz to tax your brain and test your anime knowledge. NEO-OTAKU questions are based on material currently available in the UK and USA, so they shouldn't give you too much trouble, but the higher levels may present more of a challenge. Answers next issue!

NEO-OTAKU

1. Name Belldandy's big sister in OH MY GODDESS!
2. Who are Angel's team-mates in ANGEL COP?
3. Who directed KISHIN TROOPS?
4. Who voices Priss in the English dub of BUBBLE GUM CRISIS?

OTAKU

1. What was the first UK release on the Manga Video label, and in which year?
2. Which video label also publishes the GRAPHIC VISIONS comic line?
3. Which bird-persona does JOE take in GATCHAMAN/BATTLE OF THE PLANETS?
4. Name the princess killed in a flier crash in KAZE NO TANI NO NAUSICAA

SUPER-OTAKU

1. Which British fanzine recently went over to electronic publication only?
2. Who connects WINDARIA : LEGEND OF FABULOUS BATTLE and LEDA : FANTASTIC ADVENTURES OF YOHKO?
3. Who wrote the novel series on which LEGEND OF GALACTIC HEROES is based?
4. Which seiyuu voiced Lin Minmay in SUPERDIMENSIONAL FORTRESS MACROSS?

Here are the long awaited answers to last months questions:

NEO-OTAKU : 1. Earth, 2. Bonaparte, 3. Silky Doll, 4. Haruhiko Mikimoto

OTAKU : 1. KAGAKU NINJATAI GATCHAMAN, 2. Kazunori Ito and Akemi Takada, 3. Ainu, 4. THE ROSE, fanzine of ANIME HASSHIN

SUPER-OTAKU : 1. 1981 2. Isao Takahata, 3. GINGA TETSUDO NO YORU/NIGHT ON THE MILKY WAY RAILWAY, Kenji Miyazawa, 4. Go Nagai, MAZINGER Z, 1987

RUBINA MANES, Via Jenner 4, 34148 Trieste, ITALY : 'Hello! I'm a fan of anime and manga; faves are SAILOR MOON, MAISON IKKOKU, CREAMY, RANMA 1/2, ORANGE ROAD, etc etc. I would like to exchange letters with anyone in the world who likes anime. Please, write to me.'

LUCY PREECE, 71 Gwyddon Road, Abercarn, Gwent, NP1 5GZ, South Wales : 'Hi! I'm 18 years old, looking for pen-friends from anywhere around the world, interested in all types of manga but my favourite artist is Rumiko Takahashi (I just can't get enough!) I'm learning Japanese so a Japanese penpal would be really helpful. Write me a letter and I guarantee I'll reply!'

JAN-FEI LI, 26 Kirton Close, Reading, Berks., RG3 2NS, UK : 'I'm 20, into manga/anime in a BIG way, would like to hear from anyone anywhere! Faves DRAGONBALL Z, CITY HUNTER, HERE IS GREENWOOD, MAISON IKKOKU, PATLABOR, URUSEI YATSURA & VIDEO GIRL AI.'

DOUGLAS HUDSON, 55 Chaucer Road, Rugby., Warks., CV22 5RR, UK : 'Will reply to any letters from anime/manga fans. Likes all types of anime, faves include RANMA 1/2, KOR, VIDEO GIRL AI and SILENT MOBIUS. I'll correspond/trade with anyone, please write!'

IAIN McCLUMPHA, 76 Glencroft Road, King's Park, Glasgow, G44 5RD, Scotland : 'Animanga modeller and big 'A-KO' fan wants to contact other animanga modellers - swap ideas, techniques, etc. All modellers welcome but would appreciate big A-KO, UY and CUTE fans. Please, no UROTSUKIDOJI and gore freaks! (I'm not after models - I've got my own collection!')

MARTIN READ, 69 Clyde Road, Didsbury, Manchester M20 2WW, UK : 'Konnichiwa to all Japanese readers! I am 30 years old and love anime and the art of kawaii, seeking Japanese otaku penpals to help me find kawaii merchandise, exchange letters, products and cultural information. Please write!'

FRANK VERBRUGGEN, Welvaartlaan 51, 9140 Temse, Belgium : 'I'm looking for penpals worldwide to exchange info, collectors' cards, etc; faves are DBZ, GIANT ROBO, GUNBUSTER, GALL FORCE, all PROJECT A-KO's, and everything from Shirow, Otomo, Takahashi.'

ANDREW WALLER, 52 Gadshill Drive,

Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS12 6UX, UK : 'Hi! I'm 15, looking for male or female penpals from TOKYO, JAPAN. I enjoy anything by Takahashi, Shirow and Yuzo Takada. Fave anime includes MACROSS, SAZAN EYES, LUPIN SANSEI and much more besides. MACROSS is a religion to me, so anyone with the same passion (and news on MACROSS 7) will be very welcome! I will reply to all letters, so I hope to hear from you soon, Arigato!'

JEERAN CHYLE, 23 St. Helens Road, Flat 3, Hastings, E. Sussex, TN34 2LQ, England : 'I'm a great anime fan but writing with something else in mind. I love Hong Kong movies, but the only magazines I can find have no letters page! I'd like letters from ANY fan of Hong Kong films (not just karate, though) from an English speaking country, eg Australia. I like Chow Yun Fat, Jackie Chan and Andy Lau films; people with the same tastes, please write.'

JUAN LUIS MANZANO, c/Isabel Garau, 72, 1^a, Ca'n Picafort, 077458 Illes Balears, SPAIN : 'I'm 21 and my faves are Toriyama, Hojo, Shirow, Takahashi .. DR. SLUMP is without doubt the best anime that ever exists!'

MARK WILCOCK, 9 Everard Road, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 6NN, England 'Hi, I'm 15 and would like to correspond with fellow manga freaks. Fave manga GUYVER, AD POLICE, APPLESPEED and FIST OF THE NORTH STAR. Luv drawing and SNES. Will reply without fail to all of you! (Promise.)'

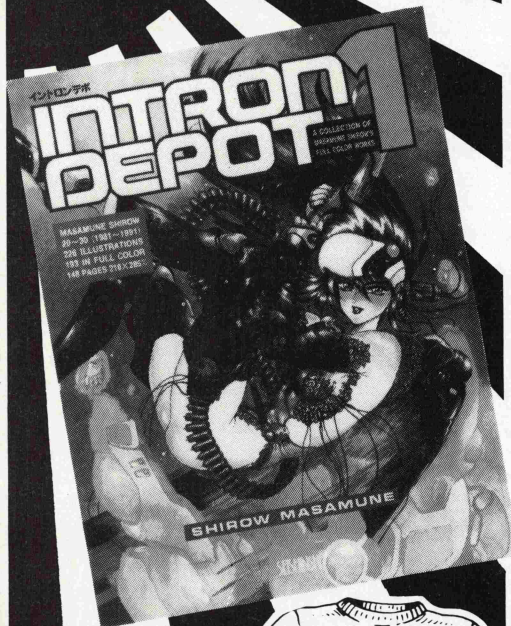
KIT-LIN DE GROOT, Oranjensingel 17, 4811 CH, Breda, The Netherlands : 'Hi, a I'm a 17-years-old Chinese boy who lives in the Netherlands and I would like to have penpals especially Chinese/Japanese girls. Fave anime/manga MS GUNDAM, VIDEO GIRL AI, OH MY GODDESS!, URUSEI YATSURA.'

SERGIO PALUMBO, Via N. Ronco, 39/4, 16149 Geneva, Italy: 'I'm an Italian boy, 26, I'd like to correspond with boys of Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Australia and Ireland who are into SF, Fantasy, anime & manga. I like GUNDAM, GHOST IN THE SHELL, MACROSS, PATLABOR, RANMA, GUYVER and many others. I already have a lot of penpals, but a reply is guaranteed to everyone!'

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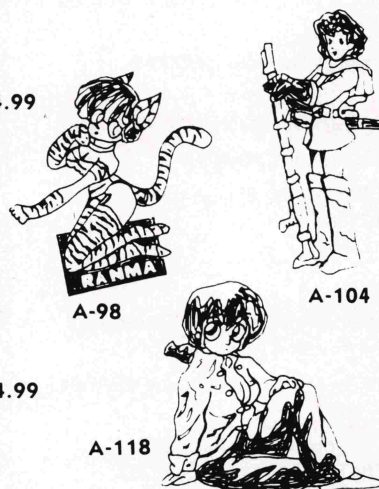
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Ah, my goddess, My neighbour Totoro, Ranma Chan sunbathing, Ranma Chan w/sword, Ranma 1/2 male & female, Nausicaa w/baby, Nausicaa on Miehve, Silent Mobius-Katsumi, Liqueur, Urusei Yatsura **£6.00** each

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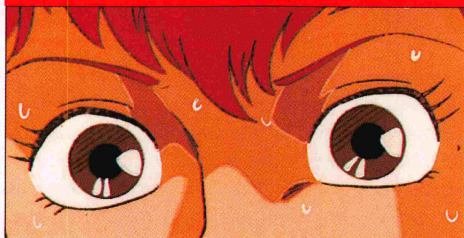
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アイキャッチ



eyecatch

...and yes, we can now accept colour artwork as well as black and white work for this page, so get painting!

*Ah, oishii! (Ah, delicious!)

C-KO'S GINGER SURPRISES

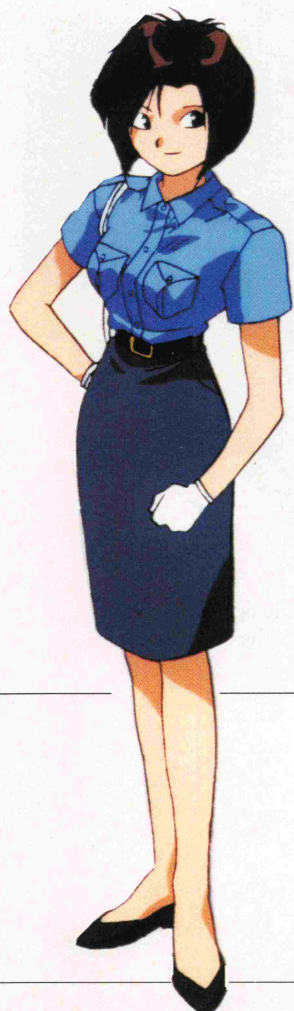
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ANIME GALLERY

We first introduced the dynamic duo of policewomen Natsumi Tsujimoto (left) and Miyuki Kobayakawa (right) in December 1994 when we spotlighted file 1 of this OVA series from AAA MEGAMISAMA (Oh! My Goddess) creator Kosuke Fujishima.

Now TAIHO SHICHAUZO (You're Under Arrest) is to be released in the USA by AminEigo - can a UK release be far behind? Join us next issue as we take a closer look at parts 2 & 3, and meanwhile admire our striking back cover: the cover art to File 2.

TAIHO SHICHAUZO



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